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ARMY AND NAVY

A Weekly Publication for Our Boys

ROMANCE SPORTS ADVENTURE



"I DEFY YOU, SLAVES OF A ROYAL MASTER," FLUNG BACK CATE.
(From "Saving a King," by Ensign Clarke Fitch, U.S. N.) **Complete in this number.**

STREET & SMITH

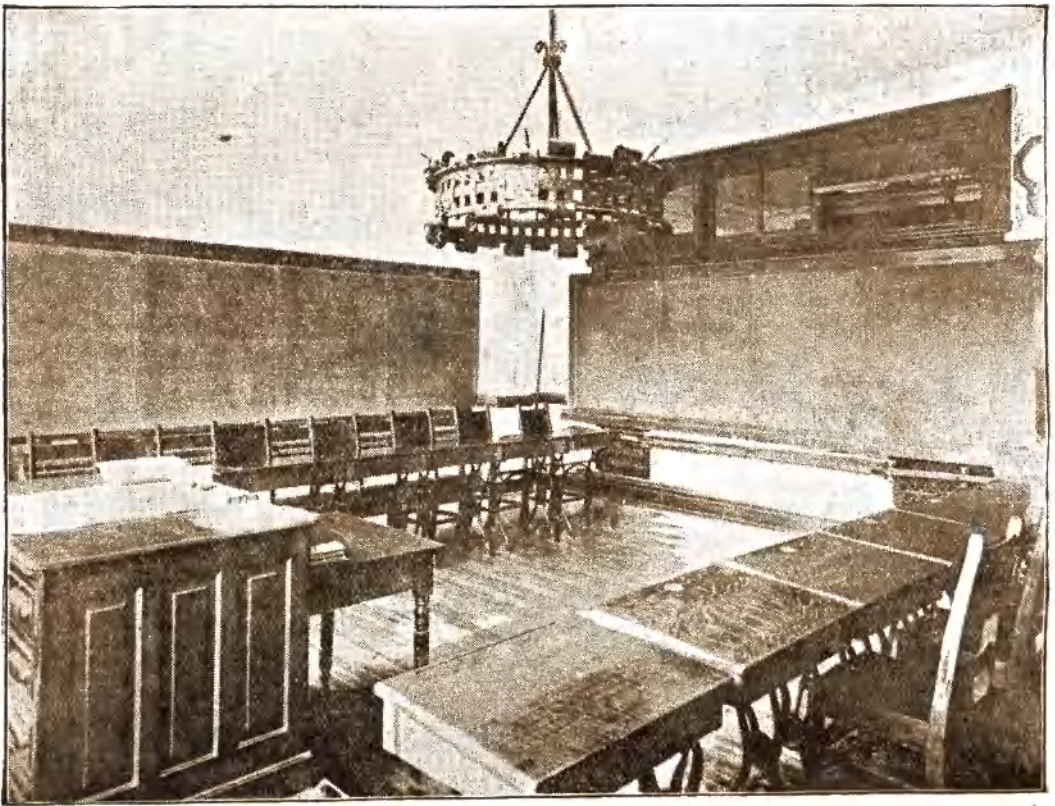
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A Typical Recitation Room.

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A WEEKLY PUBLICATION FOR OUR BOYS.

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PRIZE CONTEST.

POCKET MONEY FOR CHRISTMAS.

THE publishers of the ARMY AND NAVY are desirous of obtaining the opinions of their readers on the military and naval cadet stories now running, and for that purpose offer the following prizes for the best letters on the subject. TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS divided into FIVE PRIZES of FIVE DOLLARS EACH will be given for the five most sensible opinions as to which is the best written, and most interesting story of the ten to be published in Nos. 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23 of the ARMY AND NAVY. Letters should not exceed two hundred words in length. The contest will close December 1st, 1897. Address all letters to "CRITICISM CONTEST," ARMY AND NAVY, STREET & SMITH, 238 William Street, New York.



SAVING A KING;

OR,

Clif Faraday's Brave Deed.

By Ensign Clarke Fitch, U. S. N.

CHAPTER I.

THE ENGLISHMAN WITH A "HAW!"

"Aw, ye don't mean to say the blawsted thing will fire a shot forty miles?"

"Thirty-nine miles, two hundred and fifty yards, fifty-six feet and eleven inches is the exact record, sir."

"But, don't ye know, that's almost as far as it is from Lun'nun to Oxford, bah Jove!"

"Just thirteen feet, three inches further, sir."

"Haw!"

"The charge is the most peculiar part of it, sir."

"Ya-as?"

"Very peculiar. In fact, you would hardly believe it."

The speaker, a handsome, merry-faced youth clad in the uniform of a United States Naval Academy cadet, leaned confidentially toward his companion and added in an impressive whisper:

"We use green Holland cheese, sir."

"What! Bah Jove, you cawn't use cheese to fire a gun, don't you know?"

"Fact, sir. I'm not supposed to give the secret away, but I know you won't repeat it. The American Government is very progressive, sir. And the American naval officer is great on inventions. It was a cadet that invented the 'cheesite,' as the new explosive is called. He made the discovery in a very queer way."

The young cadet paused a second for breath, then he continued in the same impressive tone:

"He was a shipmate of mine at the Academy, sir. His name was Mudd. Funny name, eh? Well, Mudd was very

fond of Dutch cheese. Ate it all the time. One day he brought a pound or two into our room—I bunked with him, you know—and hid it in the stove. There happened to be a little fire in it, and bless me if the cheese and heat didn't generate gas and blow the room into the middle of the Severn river. I was nearly drowned trying to swim ashore."

"Haw! Most extraordinary. Must make a note of it."

"Great, isn't it? Well, Mudd—when he left the hospital; had three ribs broken and lost a piece of his solar plexus—he experimented on the 'cheesite' found the gas, and is now worth a million. Great, isn't it?"

The cadet's companion was an Englishman of about twenty-three. He had a full, round red face with a pair of pronounced "mutton chop" whiskers. A single glass, or monocle, was screwed tightly in one eye; and he was dressed in tweeds of the loudest patterns.

There was a vacant, open-mouthed expression on his face that seemed peculiarly appropriate to his general appearance.

The young naval cadet finished his remarkable description of the discovery of "cheesite" without the slightest indication of mirth.

"Haw! Most extraordinary invention," exclaimed the Englishman. "But you Americans, don't ye know, are extraordinary creatures, anyway. Haw! I had a cousin who went across the pond a few years ago. Landed in Ohio or some other town, I believe, and started the most peculiar business. Haw! it was really remarkable."

He stopped to give his glass another twist, and continued with a yawn:

"Haw! the cousin was a queer fellow. He ran away to—aw!—Africa or Iceland when he was a youngster, and had a wild time of it. Then he settled down in Lun'nun, and——"

"What was the queer business he was in?"

"Yas. He settled in the town of Ohio and started a shop, don't you know. Haw! haw! It was deuced comical. I split me sides ever time I think of it, don't ye know."

"But the business?"

"The business? Haw! I forgot what it was, ye know. But it was a blasted peculiar thing. Haw!"

The cadet laughed.

"I am deuced obliged to you for your trouble, don't ye know," resumed his companion, extracting an elaborate case from his coat. "Here's me pasteboard. I—aw—would be delighted to see you again."

"Thanks. I haven't a card with me, but my name is Faraday, Clifford Faraday, and I am a naval cadet of the new fourth class on board this practice, the Monongahela. We left Annapolis, Maryland, where our Naval Academy is situated, several weeks ago, and have been here in Lisbon three days."

Clif read the card. The words, finely engraved, were:

"J. Cheshire-Cheshire Cate,
"London, England."

It was shortly before noon on a July day. The practice ship was riding at anchor in the river off the main landing dock of Lisbon, Portugal.

The presence of the old American frigate, which, despite her age, was trim and neat aloft and alow, had attracted a number of visitors from the city.

The officers of the ship and the naval cadets forming the crew, always gallant and hospitable, had welcomed them heartily, and were showing the vessel.

To Clif Faraday's lot had fallen this exaggerated specimen of the genus Briton, and the cadet's delight was great.

He proceeded to spin yarns that even the proverbial marine would not listen to,

but J. Cheshire-Cheshire Cate simply looked vacant and said 'Haw!'

The morning was bright and pleasant, and the crowd of visitors was constantly increasing. The elite of the city had evidently selected this day on which to inspect the "Yankee" practice ship, as the visitors were altogether of the better class.

The broad spar deck was thronged with handsome girls and well-dressed gentlemen. The gay European costumes interspersed here and there with the attractive uniforms of the officers and the natty dress of the cadets formed an inspiring scene.

A band made up of naval cadets discoursed sweet music from a tastefully decorated stand on the quarter-deck. From the spanker-gaff floated the Stars and Stripes resplendent in new bunting.

While Clif was reading the inscription on the card given him by the Englishman, a cadet rather slight of body, and with a delicate, refined face, hurriedly approached him and said in a stage whisper:

"She's coming, Clif. She's in a boat alongside."

"Who? Not——"

"Yes. It's the girl. It's Miss Juanita. She's got another girl with her."

"Thanks," replied Clif, hurriedly. Turning to J. Cheshire-Cheshire Cate, he added:

"Please excuse me, sir. I wish to meet a friend."

"Certainly, by all means, deah boy," drawled the Englishman, waving his monocle. "I am deuced obliged to you for your—aw!—kindness, don't ye know. Pray consider my rooms ashore your—aw—home. Glad to see you again, don't ye know."

As Clif hurried toward the gangway something very like a scowl came into J. C-C. Cate's previously vacant face, and he muttered beneath his breath:

"Miss Windom coming aboard here? And she knows this young cub of an American. What complications will this lead to?"

CHAPTER II.

SAVING A KING.

Clif reached the gangway ladder just as

a beautiful girl of seventeen with dark, sparkling eyes, stepped down to the deck, accompanied by another girl of her own age.

When she espied the young cadet she blushed slightly, and held out her hand with a winning smile.

"This is indeed a pleasure, Miss Windom," he said, with even more earnestness than the remark warranted.

"To me, Mr. Faraday," the fair young girl replied, laughingly. "I have been longing for the time when I could return your visit of—of—when was it, Elna?"

"Such a long, long time ago," responded her companion, mischievously. "It was day before yesterday."

"Only day before yesterday," laughed Juanita Windom, with a shy glance at Clif, who looked extremely self-conscious under the battery of such eyes. "Why, it seems months since you called at the house. And the dreadful adventure you had at the upper plaza when that horrid driver tried to rob you, and throw you down the cliff. It was in the papers yesterday. You must tell me all about it, Mr. Faraday."

"I will be delighted——"

"Haw!"

The little group turned at the sound. The Englishman, monocle screwed tightly in his eye, was making a profound bow to Juanita.

"Aw! delighted, Miss Windom. Delighted to see you on board, don't ye know. Beautiful—aw!—day; lovely weather, lovely girls, and you—aw!—the fairest of them all."

"Haw!"

The exclamation did not come from the Briton, and he looked at Clif, finding that youth apparently engaged in the innocent occupation of arranging the strap of his cap.

Juanita and her friend repressed their laughter with difficulty.

"Aw! it must have been an echo, don't ye know. Fawncy hearing one's own voice when you didn't speak. Deuced good joke, eh?"

And the Englishman burst into a hearty laugh. But there was something in it that did not rung true to Clif.

By skilful manoeuvring Clif succeeded in bringing Juanita's friend and J. Ches-

hire-Cheshire Cate, together, then he boldly walked off with the fair beauty of Lisbon.

"There is a splendid view of the river from the other side of the deck, Miss Windom," he said, leading the way past the mainmast. I fancied you did not care to remain with that gentleman," he added, frankly, when they were alone. "And anyway, I wished to tell you all about my adventure of the day before yesterday."

"And I am eager to hear it," replied the girl. She continued gravely: "As for Mr. Cate, I do not like him. There is something about the man that repels me. He is a business acquaintance of father, and I met him while he was dining at our home."

"A business acquaintance," smiled Clif. "One would never connect business with—aw!—J. Cheshire-Cheshire Cate, don't ye know."

Juanita laughed.

"It is not what you would call business exactly," she replied. "Father is interested in pearls. It is a hobby and he has spent a long time and a great deal of money in collecting them. He has one of the largest collections in the world, I believe. This Mr. Cate is trying to complete a certain necklace, and he came all the way from London to see if father has one of the required size. He has, but I do not think he will part with it."

"So that is the story of Mr. Cate, eh?" said Clif. "Well, we'll talk on a more pleasant subject."

"Tell me about your adventure with——"

She was interrupted by a commotion at the gangway. A splendidly equipped barge, glittering with brass and polished wood, dashed alongside, and an officer fairly covered with gold lace ascended to the deck.

He was met by the executive officer and conducted to the cabin. A few minutes later he reappeared and was rowed ashore.

Then orderlies ran here and there, officers hurried below, and a general air of excitement prevailed.

"Something is in the wind," said Clif. "That officer brought an important mes-

sage. Ah! there goes the boatswain's mate to pass a call."

A sturdy old sailor with the insignia of a petty officer upon his sleeve rolled to the vicinity of the mainmast and gave a long, shrill whistle, adding in a deep, salty voice that had been trained in many a gale:

"A-a-all hands-s-s, dress ship! And st-stand by to man yards. Look lively!"

Like wildfire the word went along the deck:

"The king is coming on board!"

I believe that is right," Clif said, to Juanita. "They are certainly excited enough. Well, I must leave you for a little while. Duty calls me up on one of those yards. Please do not go away until I see you again."

"I am afraid I must," the girl replied. "I promised to lunch with father in the city. I'll stay a moment to see the king, though. By the way, Mr. Faraday, father would be pleased to have you call at the house this evening if you come ashore."

"And you?" asked the lad softly.

"What a question," murmured Jaunita, her eyes falling under his ardent gaze. "Why, I—I—that is—my father's wish is law, you know. I must coincide with what he says."

"No, that is not enough," persisted Clif.

"Well, if you insist," laughed the girl, "I'll say——"

"Haw! here you are, my dear Miss Windom. Ha! Ha! you quite escaped us. Denced cruel of you, don't ye know."

The Englishman sauntered up, twirling his monocle in an affected manner. Turning to Clif, he added:

"What's the row, dear boy? Are you going to bombard the blooming town?"

"No," shortly replied Faraday. "The king is coming on board."

The effect of this commonplace announcement upon the Englishman was remarkable.

He started as if struck; his face became ashen in color, and he appeared to breathe with difficulty.

"What is the matter?" asked Clif, startled. "Are you ill?"

"No—no, a little attack, that's all, don't ye know," replied Cate, recover-

ing himself with an effort. Another moment and he had regained his usual composure.

"Haw! bah Jove, Richard is himself again," he drawled, carefully adjusting his eye-glass. "So his Royal Highness is coming aboard? I'll be glad to—aw—meet him, don't ye know."

"And so will he be glad to meet you—not," replied the cadet, the last word sotto voce.

With a low bow and a smile to Juanita he hurried away to his station.

The two girls strolled to the other side of the quarter-deck as if unconscious of the Englishman's presence.

Once alone, the latter's face again took on that hunted expression noticed by Clif. He leaned against one of the broadside guns and stared absently through the port.

"It is fate," he muttered, "grim fate. It is ordered and must be done. It's a pity, too. The other chance was so good. Just think of it; strings of them, and each worth a fortune. And the girl too. If I had the opportunity and that cub of a boy was out of the way—but what's the use of dreaming. Duty first, then pleasure. Yes pleasure, if"—he laughed mirthlessly—"if I live to enjoy it."

A shrill piping of the boatswain's whistle interrupted his soliloquy, and he turned to see a rainbow of gay bunting flaunt bravely from a line stretched over the three mast trucks.

Some one near him pointed in the direction of the shore, and exclaimed that the king was putting off in the royal barge.

There was a rush for the side, but J. Cheshire-Cheshire Cate remained in his former position, the expression upon his face becoming more and more pronounced.

In the meantime Clif had joined the other cadets in the work of preparing the ship for the royal visitor.

Clif was a plebe, and his duty did not carry him above the deck, but he found plenty to do elsewhere.

Shortly after he left Juanita the crew were called to quarters. Each cadet hurried to his station at one of the guns

and stood at attention with military precision.

A moment later the saluting battery opened fire and thundered forth the national salute of twenty-one guns.

The sulphurous vapor from the last discharge had barely lifted above the hammock netting when the cannon in the fort ashore began.

The distant booming of artillery, the smoke enshrouding the old practice ship, the scores of bright flags fluttering from the masts, and the silent groups of uniformed men and cadets lined up on each side of the snowy decks formed an inspiring scene—one to tarry long in the memory.

Clif with three of his personal chums, Joy, a plebe from Nebraska, "Trolley," a student from Japan, whose name, Motohiko Asaki, had been transformed into the more American appellation, and "Nanny," Gote, the smallest cadet in the navy, were stationed at the after starboard broadside gun.

From where he stood Faraday could see the visitors grouped on the port side of the deck. He managed to catch a fleeting gleam from Juanita's sparkling eyes, then his gaze wandered to a figure clad in the loudest of loud English checks.

It was J. Cheshire-Cheshire Cate.

The doughty Briton had dropped his eyeglass and was staring eagerly toward the gangway. To Clif, who was not more than fifteen feet away, his face seemed absolutely transfigured.

He no longer wore the vacuous, simpering expression, but into his face had crept an air of desperate determination so intense that Clif marvelled at the sight.

"I say, Trolley," he whispered to the Japanese youth, who stood next to him, "just look at that blooming Englishman."

"He sick?"

"No, but he seems greatly excited. That fellow is a mystery to me. I thought at first he was an empty-headed dude, but, by George I believe he is playing a part."

"What for?" queried Joy, who had overheard him.

"I don't know," replied Clif, "but I'll keep my eyes on him just the same."

Joy winked at Trolley.

"It's a case of jealousy," he said. "Clif doesn't like the way he is hanging around Miss Windom."

Faraday laughed easily.

"If you knew her you would see the ridiculousness of your remark," he retorted. "She——"

"Silence there," sharply called out the gun captain. "Attention!"

There was a rattle of drums, a blare of bugles, then a stout, dark-featured man with a heavy curled mustache and a full sweeping beard stepped down from the gangway.

The side was manned by a number of officers who raised their caps in a salute as the visitor passed them.

It was Dom Carlos the First, King of Portugal.

He was accompanied by a gaily uniformed suite composed of naval and military officers, but he, himself, was attired in simple civilian clothes.

Captain Brooks, at the head of his staff, advanced to meet the royal visitor. Bowing profoundly he uttered a few words of welcome and led the way toward the cabin.

Clif, after one quick glance at the king, again turned his attention to Cate, the Englishman.

The fellow had stepped back, crouching behind the group of absorbed spectators, but his face was plainly visible.

The expression of implacable hatred upon it sent a flood of light through Clif's mind, and he involuntarily advanced a pace from the gun.

"Get back there," came sternly from the petty officer in charge. "What do you mean by——"

He stepped back aghast.

There was a sharp cry, a shrill note of warning, then a clamor of excited voices sounded through the ship.

A figure clad in cadet blue was seen to leave the after starboard gun and with one great leap reach the side of Dom Carlos.

It was Clif!

At the same moment a man, who had bounded from among the spectators, sprang upon the king.

There was a glitter of steel, then as the threatened monarch staggered back

to avoid the blow, a pair of little arms were thrown about the would-be assassin's body!"

CHAPTER III.

"I WANT TO SEE THE BRAVE AMERICAN BOY WHO SAVED MY LIFE."

The excitement that ensued was intense. There was a rush for the spot by visitors, officers and crew. A chorus of screams from the feminine visitors, a quick word of command, and an excited jumble of English and Portuguese.

The crowd suddenly swayed, and a man in civilian clothing—a suit with a loud check pattern—was seen to savagely force his way to the ladder leading to the after deck.

A score of hands clutched at him, but he eluded them and gained the top. As he paused for a second, bare-headed, disheveled, breathing heavily, a cry came from the frantic mob below.

"It's the Englishman!"

"Yes, the Englishman!" he flung back fiercely. "I defy you slaves of a royal master. I have tried to strike a blow for your liberty, hounds, a blow for the world's liberty and have failed. I—"

A bullet whistled past his head but he never flinched. As the crowd below surged up the ladder eager to tear him limb from limb, he retreated slowly and with magnificent courage to the railing.

As the foremost of his pursuers reached the deck, he sent a curse at them, then turned and sprang over the side into the swiftly flowing waters of the Tagus.

"After him! Quick! Five thousand milreis to the man who captures him alive!"

These words in broken English came from one of the royal suite.

A rush was made for the side, and eager glances were cast down toward the river. A dozen excited sailors and cadets recklessly leaped into the water and began a search, but nothing was seen of the desperate fugitive.

The Tagus in the immediate vicinity of the practice ship was thronged with vessels of all classes, attracted to the spot by the royal visit, and it was observed at once that the assassin's chances for escape, if he was an expert swimmer, were good.

There was commotion on board the neighboring craft, and many false alarms, but no certain sign of the Englishman's presence.

When the excited crowd on the Monongahela turned inboard again, they found a group of officers and cadets surrounding Clif, who was calmly standing in the centre while the surgeon fastened a temporary bandage round a bleeding cut in his right arm.

The king had been hurried to the cabin by his suite and Captain Brooks. A moment later he emerged and joined the group surrounding Clif.

"I want to see the brave American boy who saved my life," he insisted. "It was he who foiled that assassin and he shall have my heartfelt thanks."

"But, your majesty," implored one of his military staff, in Portuguese, "there may be other wretches on board. They may make another attempt on you."

"Then keep every one at a distance," was the retort. "Act rather than talk. It is strange you and your comrades did not prevent that man from making his attempt. What has been done to capture him?"

"Word was sent ashore at once, sire. A launch is even now on the way with instructions to the chief of police and the general in charge of the district. The assassin will be in prison before dark."

"See that he is," exclaimed the king, imperiously. Turning to Clif he extended both his hands and added in excellent English:

"My brave lad, I thank you. I deplore the wound you have received in my service."

"It is nothing, sir," replied Clif, simply.

"A king's life nothing?" smiled his majesty. "Ah, that is a democratic principle. It is American. I admire your cleverness and bravery. You will hear from me."

He turned away, after learning from the surgeon that Clif's wound was a mere scratch, and, surrounded by his suite, left the ship.

A wild cheer greeted him as he entered the barge, and there was every sign of joy at his escape.

As soon as the barge was clear of the Monongahela, Captain Brooks, ever mindful of his duty, gave orders to man yards and fire a second salute.

In the meantime the search for the Englishman had been prosecuted with vigor.

The news that a reward of five thousand milreis, about six thousand dollars, had been offered for the fugitive, dead or alive, had spread like wild fire.

In a remarkably short space of time the surface of the river in front of the city was literally covered with boats, large and small.

As the minutes passed and no sign of the Englishman was discovered, the belief that he had perished became prevalent.

When Clif went forward after an interview with the captain and officers of the Monongahela—an interview that caused his heart to beat with unaccustomed rapidity—he found an ovation awaiting him.

He tried to escape, and dodged down the forward ladder for that purpose, but a number of new fourth class cadets, headed by the lanky Joy, captured him, and he was born in triumph about the decks.

"Hurray for the Yankee who saved a king," shrieked little Nanny. "Three cheers and—and a whole cageful of tigers."

The cheers were given and the tigers too, but in subdued tones. It is not considered the proper thing to make much noise on board an American war vessel.

"You make one good speech now," insisted Trolley, grinning broadly.

"Not much," was Clif's flat refusal. "I draw the line at that. What's all this row about anyway? One would think war had been declared at the very least."

"Something more important than that, dear boy," drawled a plebe named Toggles. "I'll wager anything the news is being cabled about the world this very minute. And the name of Clifford Faraday, new fourth class plebe, function, and rescuer of kings in general, will be in everybody's mouth before dinner. Clif, your fortune is made. I see you Lord High Muck-a-muck of Portugal before you are a day older."

Clif laughed carelessly.

"I am content to remain a cadet in the United States Naval Academy," he replied. "That's honor enough for me."

"What did the girl say?" asked Nanny slyly. "I saw you talking to her after your great act."

"If you want to know, youngster, she asked me to tea to-night and I accepted the invitation. She also said she would like to have me bring another cadet."

A hubbub broke out at once. Every plebe within hearing was eager to be selected.

Clif finally decided to take Joy, much to the disappointment of the others. The liberty party was called away at one o'clock, and, shortly after that hour the two chums found themselves ashore.

They little suspected as they carelessly walked toward the main plaza that they were destined to experience some very thrilling adventures before they again saw the old Monongahela.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BROKEN TREE BRANCH.

The pedestrians in the streets taken by Clif and Joy little thought as they glanced carelessly at the two cadets that the sturdy youth with the intelligent, manly face was he who had saved their beloved ruler, Dom Carlos the First, from death that day.

It was well for Clif's peace of mind and comfort that this was true, and he inwardly rejoiced thereat.

The city was in an uproar. All Lisbon seemed to be hunting for the fugitive and hoping against hope that he had escaped from the river.

The large reward was not the sole cause of this feverish activity. The people far and wide respected and loved their ruler and they thirsted more for the assassin's blood than for the fortune his body represented.

The streets and plazas were filled with excited groups discussing the event. Platoons of mounted police and companies of soldiers kept the air ringing with the tread of galloping hoofs.

"It takes something like an attack on the king to stir up these people," said Joy. He added with a sigh: "Isn't it enough to make a peaceful man sorrow

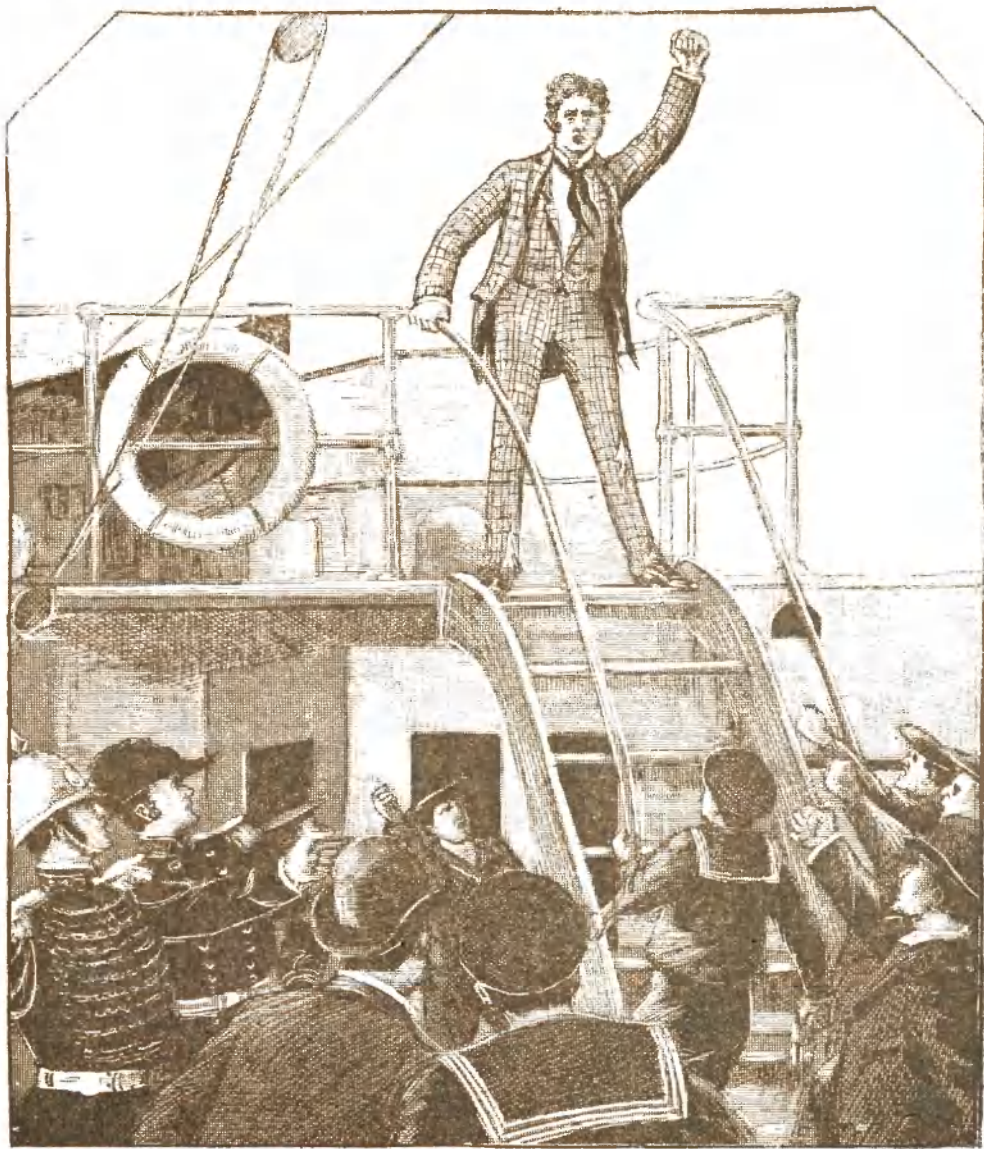
to see so much strife and contention and— and pomp of war? Woe!—woe!”

“Oh, shut up, you fraud,” laughed Clif. “There isn’t a plebe in the Academy, nor a cadet, who likes fighting more than you do. You would rather fight than eat.”

Which was literally true. Joy’s solemn

eccentricities Joy from Nebraska was an honest friend and a warm admirer of Clif Faraday.

The two cadets spent some time looking about the city, then they engaged a carriage and ordered the driver to take them to the suburb in which lived the Windoms.



“I DEFY YOU SLAVES OF A ROYAL MASTER,” FLUNG BACK CATE (page 1063).

countenance, his habit of sighing and his fondness for talking about peace had deceived his chums at first, but they learned before many days that his love of fighting was only equalled by his penchant for joking. He was one of the characters of the Naval Academy, but with all his

“This has been a day of events, chum,” remarked Clif as he leaned back in the vehicle. “Who would ever take that blooming ‘haw’ Englishman to be an anarchist, and one of the very worst type, too. Why, I guyed him for a half

hour this morning and thought all the time he was a fool."

"He was a fool," replied Joy grimly.

"Yes, otherwise he would never have tried such a preposterous trick. I wonder if he came here to make the attempt on Dom Carlos' life?"

"Like as not. I read in a paper the other day that considerable activity existed in anarchistic circles. Sort of getting ready to slay a few monarchs, I suppose. They drove a lot of 'em from Paris and London. Perhaps this J. Cheshire-Cheshire Cate was one of them."

"No doubt," yawned Clif, stretching his arms.

"D'ye think he was drowned?"

"Yes. He remained under water too long. Small loss to the community at large. I guess Miss Windom won't wear mourning. She couldn't bear the sight of him."

"I don't blame her. Was he a friend of the old man?"

"No. Merely a business acquaintance. I believe. Said he was looking for a certain-sized pearl to finish a necklace. Mr. Windom is a collector of pearls, you know. He has a fortune in them."

Joy sighed.

"Wonder if the pearls go with the girl," he sighed.

"Let's talk on some sensible subject," retorted Clif shortly.

It was within an hour of dusk when they finally reached the pretty villa occupied by the Windoms.

The house was situated in the centre of an extensive park well-kept, and shaded by fine old trees. There was a small lodge at the gate, presided over by an elderly native, who admitted the cadets with every mark of respect.

He had evidently learned of Clif's gallant deed that morning.

Juanita and her girl friend were awaiting them when they reached the house, and the cordial welcome the two lads received made them very happy.

Shortly before tea Mr. Windom arrived from business. His greeting of Clif was characteristic of the man whose sole hobby in life was the collection of rare and valuable pearls.

"I am proud to know you, sir," he exclaimed, wringing the lad's hand. "Proud

to know that you are a guest under my roof to-night. The whole city—the whole world, in fact—is ringing with your name. It was great, it was magnificent! It was a deed worthy of an American.

"But you are wanted at the palace, my dear boy. The king has sent messenger after messenger to the Monongahela in search of you. The old ship is fairly surrounded by steamers and tugs and small craft bearing bands of music and visitors. They call for you in vain. How can you remain in my poor house while the whole city is eager to see you?"

"If it is all the same to you, sir," laughed Clif, "I'd much rather remain here."

He glanced slyly at Juanita, and was gratified to see a soft rosy flush overspread her fair cheeks.

Kindly-hearted Mr. Windom seemed greatly pleased at Faraday's diplomatic answer and carried both boys off to look at his pearls, which were kept in a small iron box in one corner of his private room.

After duly praising the really magnificent collection, some of which were almost priceless in value, Clif and Joy returned to the girls.

Three very pleasant hours were spent after tea, then the stern rules of naval discipline which had decreed that the ship must be gained before midnight, caused the two cadets to announce their departure.

Juanita and her friend were left at the house, but Mr. Windom hospitably started to see his guests to the gate.

"It is not often we have the honor of entertaining the rescuer of a ruling monarch, Mr. Faraday," he smiled, as they walked down the tiled path. "So I must make the most of it."

"I wish the king hadn't come on board to be rescued, sir," laughed Clif. "Especially in a country where so much——Gorry!"

He stopped and placed both hands to his head. His cap had fallen to the ground, together with a large twig from a tree under which they had just passed.

"What is the matter?" asked Mr. Windom hastily. "Are you hurt?"

"No. It startled me, that's all," re-

plied Clif. "It was just a branch, rotten, I suppose."

He picked up his cap and the twig, the latter more out of curiosity than anything else, and walked on after his companions.

"I must have those branches clipped again," said Mr. Windom. "I did not know the trees were in such condition."

Cordial farewells were exchanged at the gate, and the two cadets entered a carriage which had been ordered for that hour.

"I must be getting nervous," laughed Clif as they rolled away from the villa. He held up the twig and added:

"When I jump on being struck by such as this, it is time——"

He ceased speaking abruptly; and uttered a low whistle. The carriage was passing close to a street lamp at that moment, and the light fell full upon the object in his hand.

"What's up?" queried Joy.

"Do you see the end of this bit of wood?" replied Clif.

"Yes."

"Well, it's broken sharp and clean."

"What of it?"

Clif glanced at the lanky plebe for a moment before replying, then he said slowly:

"This twig is not rotten, chum. Neither did it break of its own weight."

Joy showed more excitement than his wont.

"Then you think——" he began.

"There was some one up that tree," finished Clif, impressively. "And he was there for no good."

"Driver, let us out," he added to the coachman.

The latter promptly drew up his horses and received his fare without a word of comment. He was too much accustomed to the vagaries of passengers in general to feel surprised.

A minute later Clif and Joy were hurriedly making their way back to the Windom villa.

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CHAPTER V.

THE MIDNIGHT MARAUDER.

"What do you think of it, chum?" asked Joy, as they rapidly retraced their steps.

"Hard to say," replied Clif, briefly. "Perhaps a plot to rob the house."

"Valuable pearls, eh?"

"Yes."

"We may be mistaken after all," persisted the lanky plebe. "Limbs have a habit of dropping from trees, you know. We would feel rather foolish if we aroused the house and found only a cat or something like that. Miss Windom would laugh."

"I'll take the risk of that. I'd take any risk rather than see——"

"See the pearls stolen," interrupted Joy, with an internal chuckle.

"Confound the pearls."

"Oh, I meant girl. Excuse me."

By this time the villa was reached. The extensive grounds were separated from the street by a stone wall ten feet in height and surmounted by an ornamental iron railing.

Clif halted near one end of the wall and announced that he would try to enter there.

"No use arousing the lodge-keeper," he added. "There may be nothing in it after all, and I don't want to raise an alarm without proof. You can stay here and I'll take a peep through the grounds on the quiet."

Joy protested, but Clif was firm.

"Well, it won't be long until I follow you," muttered the former as he gave his friend a "boost" to the top of the wall. "You are altogether too fond of getting into danger. I'll have to look after you, sonny."

Clif found it an easy matter to drop into the grounds. Once inside he crouched close to the wall and took his bearings.

The night had assumed that depth of blackness usual before the rise of a full moon. The villa grounds presented one smudge of darkness with no alternating patches of light and shade. A cool breeze came from the direction of the river, bringing occasional bursts of noise and commotion from the central portion of the city.

Clif moved away from the wall, stepping carefully and with hands outstretched.

He had not covered a dozen feet when he plumped squarely into a depressed flower bed, and sprawled headlong, creat-

ing what seemed to him a prodigious clatter.

He lay quiet for a brief period, then not hearing any sounds, rose to his feet and once more moved in the general direction of the house.

He knew that somewhere in the blackness in front was the tree, but of its exact location he was ignorant.

Suddenly a twinkling light appeared through the gloom.

It gleamed for a moment, then vanished.

"Guess they have gone to bed," muttered Clif.

The thought gave him confidence, and he proceeded with less caution. The cadet had no desire to be discovered prowling about the Windom grounds. Explanations would be awkward, especially if the robber up the tree proved to be some marauding cat or restless fowl.

Clif was not so positive in his belief now. The simple fact that the limb had been snapped from the tree was no longer a convincing evidence that something underhand was in progress, and he proceeded in a half-hearted manner, almost decided to turn back.

Presently his feet touched gravel, and he knew that he had gained the path leading to the gate.

He paused and glanced about, at the same time listening intently. The only sounds came from Nature's voice in the chirping of night insects and the distant murmuring of the city.

"Everything seems all right here," muttered Clif. "I guess I was mistaken after all. I think I will——"

He ceased speaking and glanced upward, attracted by a rustling among the leaves of a tree under which he was standing.

Before he could move or cry out, a heavy object dropped swiftly upon him, and he sprawled headlong upon the path unconscious!

Out in the street Joy paced up and down impatiently in the shadows of the trees.

As the minutes passed without sign or sound of Clif the lanky plebe became uneasy, and he reproached himself for permitting his friend to make the venture alone.

"There was no sense in it anyway," he muttered. "I could have gone along just as well as not. If he don't come out in three seconds I'll follow."

Joy's "three seconds" soon elapsed, and the plebe made good his word by boldly scaling the wall. This he did by propping a piece of wood against the brick barrier, thus gaining the ironwork at the top.

Dropping lightly upon the soft earth on the other side he started across the grounds.

He had barely taken a dozen steps when there came through the night air a crash of splintering glass, then a scream of terror.

A moment of breathless silence, then a hoarse murmuring of excited voices, interspersed by occasional shouts. By that time Joy, armed with a stout stick, was bounding in the direction of the uproar.

The intense blackness of the night had given way to a subdued light from the rising moon, whose silvery rim was even then showing above the city.

Suddenly, outlined in this faint illumination, Joy saw the figure of a man dash away from the house.

As the plebe turned to follow, shouting at the top of his voice, another figure rose up in front of the fugitive and grappled with him.

The two were struggling fiercely when Joy reached the spot. There was light enough for him to recognize in one of the combatants his chum, Clif Faraday.

That was enough for the brave lad. Calling out encouragingly, he sprang upon the back of the other.

The cadets found their hands full. The stranger fought like one possessed. He bit and kicked and rained blows upon his antagonists, but they clung to him with unswerving courage until he at last sank to the ground exhausted.

"Bring a rope here, quick!" gasped Clif, as Mr. Windom, accompanied by a number of servants ran up. "Bring a rope to tie this fellow. We've got a prize."

"My pearls, my pearls!" wailed the old merchant, wringing his hands. "They are gone. I tried to save them, but the robber——"

"We've got the robber all right,"

interrupted Clif cheerily. "And there's your pearls over yonder."

He inclined his head toward an indistinct object lying upon the path. Mr. Windom snatched it up with a cry of joy. It was a bag containing his priceless collection.

The servants returned with a rope and several lanterns. Several of the men assisted the cadets to bind the prisoner, then he was turned over with his face to the light.

Cries of amazement came from all save Clif.

"Great Gosh!" gasped Joy, "it's the Englishman! It's J. Cheshire-Cheshire Cate."

"The would-be assassin of Dom Carlos, the king!" added Mr. Windom, almost dropping the bag of pearls in his astonishment. "Seize him, men. Call the police. Run, some of you. Quick! quick!"

The alarm was not necessary. Already a number of the neighbors and a couple of mounted policemen, attracted by the tumult, were clamoring at the gate.

They were admitted, but before they reached the group Clif took Mr. Windom aside and said hurriedly:

"Do not reveal the identity of the prisoner, sir. If it is learned that he is the assailant of the king, they will tear him limb from limb. Better let the law take its course."

The old merchant agreed, and on the arrival of the police he stated that the prisoner had made an attempt to rob him.

J. Cheshire-Cheshire Cate had maintained a sullen silence from the moment he was overpowered. Joy tried to induce him to speak, but without effect.

After a great deal of talk and excited gesticulations, the police led their prisoner away. The secret of his identity was further kept by his costume, which consisted of a tattered cap and a laborer's suit. He had evidently abandoned the English check suit during his flight.

Clif and Joy remained at the villa long enough to see Juanita and learn that it was through her the presence of the fugitive was discovered.

The house had just retired for the night. Wishing to secure some article left in the library Juanita had entered that room. She was just in time to see a

strange man tiptoeing from her father's apartments.

She screamed, and the intruder made a dash for the nearest window, and leaped boldly through the sash. Mr. Windom was found bound and gagged in bed. It was plain the desperate man had worked quickly.

Clif explained the arousing of his suspicions by the broken tree-branch, then he and Joy took their departure.

It was long after midnight before they reached the ship, and they had already been marked in the log as "absent without leave."

Clif's story speedily caused the erasing of the entry, however. The news of the assassin's capture soon spread throughout the Monongahela, and Faraday came in for more honors.

The following day he and Joy were summoned ashore to appear against J. Cheshire-Cheshire Cate.

They found the city in a state of intense excitement as the prisoner's identity had leaked out. A strong military guard surrounded the jail to prevent the enraged populace from seizing the assassin.

Cate, as he was still called, continued his policy of silence, and the details of his escape from the river were never known.

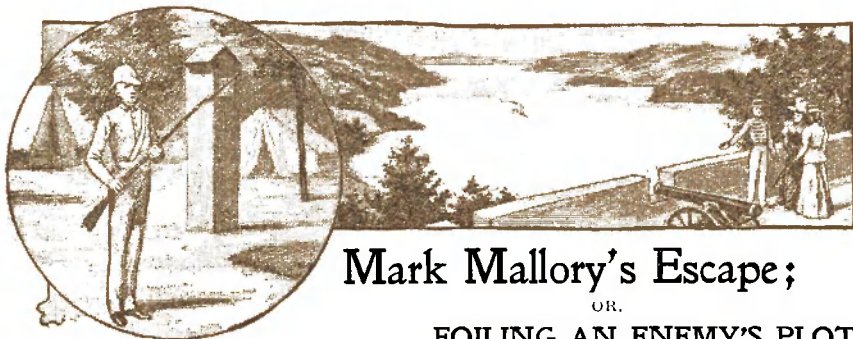
During the balance of the practice cruiser's stay in Lisbon, Clif was made a social lion. The position was not to his taste, and he hailed with delight the order to "up anchor" for departure from Lisbon.

The parting from fair Juanita was his only regret, but he gained some consolation from her promise to write by every mail.

As the gallant old Monongahela left the city en route to the Island of Madiera, her next calling place, all the river craft saluted her with a prodigious din of whistles, and she was accompanied to the mouth of the Tagus by the royal yacht as a special mark of favor to the "Yankee cadet who saved a king."

[THE END.]

Ensign Clarke Fitch's next Naval Academy novelette will be entitled "Clif Faraday's Deliverance. An Adventure in Maderia." No. 24 Army and Navy.



Mark Mallory's Escape;

OR,

FOILING AN ENEMY'S PLOT.

By Lieut. Frederick Garrison, U. S. A.

CHAPTER I.

CADET MALLORY'S STRANGE CONDUCT.

"Say, fellows, what do you think?"
 "What's the matter?"
 "Mallory's given in!"
 "Given in! How do you mean?"
 "He's going to let himself be hazed."
 "What!"

Two more surprised cadets than the two who uttered this last exclamation it would be hard to imagine. They had been sitting on a bench near Trophy Point, and one of them had been carelessly tinkling a mandolin. He had dropped the instrument and leaped to his feet. Now he was staring with open mouth at the new arrival, who bore the extraordinary tidings.

"Mallory given up! Gus Murray, what on earth do you mean?"

The three were cadets at the West Point Military Academy. They were yearlings, all of them. The crowd which has usually been designated in these stories as "Bull Harris' gang." There was Gus Murray, the new arrival, a low, brutal looking chap. There was the sickly and disagreeable "Merry" Vance. And there was the little fellow "Baby" Edwards, the meanest of them all.

Mallory, to whom they were referring, was a "plebe," or new cadet. He was their deadliest enemy, principally because he had refused to submit to the brutal abuse they called "hazing," and because he had met and outwitted them at every turn.

Mark Mallory was what is known as a B. J. plebe, a very unpopular variety. B.

J. is West Point's way of saying "fresh." He had dared to do things that no other plebe had even dreamed of; and hence his enemies' surprise at Murray's most unexpected announcement.

"You surely can't mean," cried Vance, "that Mallory has consented to allow the fellows to haze him?"

"Better than that even," chuckled Murray. "Better than that!"

"For Heaven's sakes," gasped the other, "sit down and tell us what you do mean. What in thunder is the use of talking riddles?"

Thus enjoined, Gus Murray explained; he was nothing loath to tell the tale.

"I'll tell you how it was," he said. "I was never more astounded in my life. I saw that plebe strolling down the street a while ago, holding his head high as ever and looking as if he owned the place."

"Confound him!" muttered Vance.

"You know," the other continued, "he's never done any work like the rest of the plebes. Usually we yearlings make them fix our tents and guns, and carry water, and so on. Mallory never has, and of course nobody's succeeded in making him. I thought I'd guy him a little just now and see how he'd take it. So I stopped and said, 'See here, plebe. Let me show you how to clean a gun.'"

"And what did he say?" cried Vance.

"Just as B. J. as ever," growled Murray. "'Thank you,' he said, 'I'll go get mine and let you do it.' Of course he knew perfectly well that I wanted to show him on mine and let him do the work. I said to him, 'I've a gun to show

you on, if you please.' And by George —,"

"You don't mean he cleaned your gun for you!" gasped Baby.

"That's just exactly what I do! You might have knocked me over with a feather. He said, 'Certainly, sir.' Yes, by jiminy, he actually said 'sir.' And when I left him he was working away like a beaver. He had the gun half cleaned. What do you think of that?"

Gus finished and gazed at his two companions triumphantly. He felt that he had accomplished something that no other member of his class ever had.

"I'll bet Mallory was afraid of you," chirruped Baby Edwards. "Don't you suppose that's it, Merry?"

Vance picked up his mandolin and resumed his cynical smile.

"I'll tell you what I think," he said.

"What?" demanded Murray.

"That you're a fool."

"What the dickens do you mean?"

"Simply," said Vance, "that Mallory was playing some kind of a joke on you."

"But he wasn't!" cried the other. "I went back after he was through and the gun was perfect. The wood was polished till it shone like a mirror. I actually did not like to touch it, it was so pretty."

"And how about the rest of the tent?" inquired Vance.

"He hadn't disturbed a thing. I looked particularly. I tell you, man, that Mallory has given in."

"It's not much like him," said Merry, dubiously.

"You don't have to look very far for the cause," began Murray. "You remember how the first class gave him a licking the other day?"

Vance admitted that might have something to do with it.

"It's got everything," chuckled Murray. "It's simply broken his spirit. Why look, man. He was black and blue all over. Even now one of his arms is in a sling. I tell you he's made up his mind that it isn't safe to carry on as he's been, and so he's decided to get meek and mild for a change."

"And, oh, say, if it's true!" cried Baby, excitedly. "If it's true! Gee whiz, won't we have some fun!"

"Just won't we!" responded Murray, doubling up his fists and glaring as if the hated plebe were really in front of him. "I just tell you I mean to make him wish he'd never been born. I've been waiting for a chance to get even with that confounded beast, and now I'll have him."

For the next half hour there was joy unbounded among those three young gentlemen. Only those who are familiar with their dispositions can comprehend the amount of satisfaction they felt; and only those who know our friend Mark Mallory's character as they did can appreciate their surprise at his "flunk."

"I wish Bull were here to hear about it," remarked Baby at last.

"Where the dickens is Bull anyhow?" inquired Murray, who was chief lieutenant in Bull's gang and an invaluable assistant in all of Bull's schemes for revenge upon Mark.

That question changed the topic of conversation for a few minutes. It was Vance who answered it.

"There's something mysterious about Bull," he said. "I've been puzzling my head to think what it means. You know Bull was absent from taps last night."

"What!"

"Yes, he was. And you know that's a pretty serious offense. It may mean court-martial, you know."

"Good gracious!" gasped Baby. "What would we do without Bull?"

"I guess we won't have to," laughed Vance. "You needn't begin to worry. I was corporal of the guard last night when Bull came in to report. It was way after eleven."

"Where on earth had he been?"

"He wouldn't tell me. He was deucedly mysterious. It seems that he had been in the water somehow and was soaking wet; all I could get out of him was that the business had something to do with Meg Adams."

"Meg Adams!" cried Gus. "I thought she wouldn't speak to him."

"Well, I don't know," said Vance. "That was what Bull told me. Anyhow he didn't seem a bit alarmed about his absence."

"The superintendent sent for him this afternoon," put in Murray. "I suppose

that was to give him a chance to explain the matter."

"Yes, and I saw Bull with Meg a while ago," added the other, shrewdly. "I shouldn't wonder if Bull were getting up some scheme. He hasn't said much about Mallory to-day. He's been very mysterious."

The mystery, whatever it was, was destined to remain unsolved, however, for just then the rattle of a drum echoed across the field, and there sprang up hastily.

"It's dress parade," said Murray.

"Yes," responded Vance, dryly. "And now you'll have a chance to show off that beautifully cleaned gun of yours. Come on."

CHAPTER II.

A SURPRISE FOR GUS MURRAY.

Gus Murray went straight to his tent when the group broke up. He hastily dusted off his clothes and looked at himself in the glass to make sure that nothing was out of place. Then he took up his gun from the rack and hurried out to "fall in."

A moment later the order was given, "Attention company!" and after roll call the battalion wheeled and marched out upon the parade ground.

The ceremony of dress parade has been described in these pages before. The solemn cadet adjutant formed the parade and then turned it over to his superior. The gayly-dressed band marched down the line and took its station. A few moments later the battalion was in the midst of its evolutions.

It was not very long before they halted again, down toward the southern end of the plain, to go through the manual of arms. It was then that Gus Murray received a shock.

The cadets had been marching with their guns at a "carry." Gus had held his that way ever since he picked it up, and then suddenly the lieutenant in command gave the order:

"Present—arms!"

In a "carry" the soldier holds his gun in the right hand, with thumb and first finger around the trigger guard. In coming to present he swings it up in front of him and seizes the stock in the left hand,

at the same time letting go with the right and reversing his grip.

The cadet lines work like a perfect machine in that drill. Every gun swings up at the same instant, every hand moves in unison, so that the sound of the many motions is but one. This time, however, there was a break, and the cause of it was our dear friend Gus.

Gus got through the first part of the motion all right. On the second part he got "stuck" (in more senses than one). When he went to let go with his right hand—he couldn't!

At first he could hardly understand what was happening. He pulled and tugged with all his might. But it did no good; his hand was fast. And in an instant the horrible truth flashed over him—Mallory—he had polished the gun with glue!

Every spectator on the grounds was staring at Gus. As for him, he was still tugging and wrestling, blushing and gasping, with rage. Finally, he saw that his efforts were useless and he gave it up in despair; he stood silent and helpless, gazing into space.

Lieutenant Ross was the name of tac in command, and he was noted for being a crank. He gave no more orders, of course, but stood and stared at the offending cadet in horror and indignation, while the cadets, who did not dare to look, but who knew that something was "up," waited and wondered.

How long this suspense and torture would last no one could tell; the tac broke in at last.

"Mr. Murray," he demanded. "What is the matter?"

"My gun!" stammered Murray. "I—I—why—that is—"

"Mr. Murray, leave the ranks!"

Blushing scarlet, the yearling obeyed, conscious of the fact that hundreds of eyes were upon him. He strode furiously down the line and once clear, set out on a run for camp, almost ready to cry with vexation. He reached his tent, rushed in, tore off his glove, and hurled his musket into the corner with a furious oath. And then he stood in the middle of his tent and clinched his fists until his nails cut the palms of his hands.

"By Heaven!" he cried, "I'll be re-

venge on that devil of a plebe if I have to kill him to do it!"

He stayed in his tent, nursing his wrath and resentment, until the battalion marched back to camp. And he refused to come out then; his classmates who inquired as to what was the matter received angry replies for their pains. And when the corps marched down to supper Murray still sat where he was. He didn't want any supper.

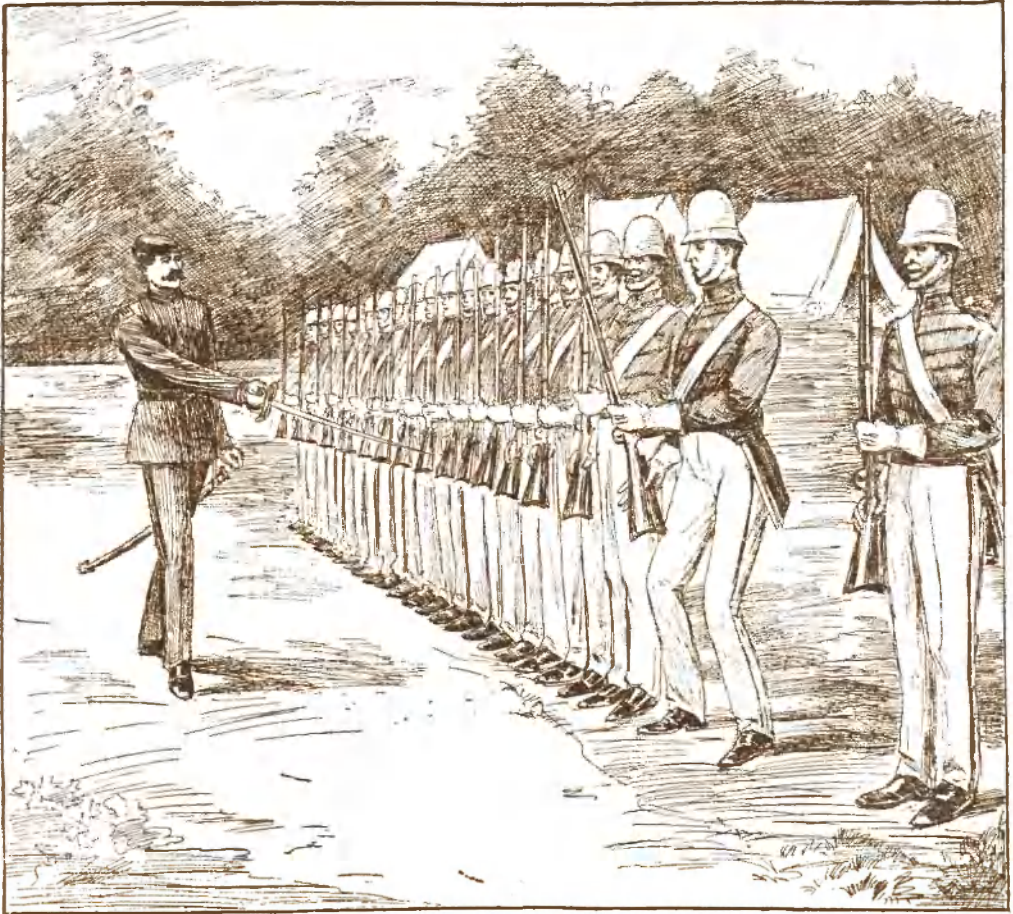
He was in just the mood to welcome a

"Come, come," said Bull, pleasantly. "You don't want to get mad with me, Gus. Tell me what's wrong."

"It's that confounded plebe!" snapped Murray.

"I thought so," said Bull. "Well, that's what my news is about. I've got a plot."

And the other's sullen glare gave place to a look of delight in an instant. He leaped to his feet with an exclamation of joy.



GUS MURRAY TRIED TO COME TO "PRESENT ARMS," BUT FAILED. THE GUN WAS COVERED WITH GLUE! (page 1072)

visitor who came then. The visitor was another yearling who had exercised his privilege of staying away from the evening meal. It was Murray's chum and crony, Bull Harris.

"Hello, old man," said he, pushing aside the tent flap. "What's up?"

"Go to blazes!" responded Murray, by way of answer.

He did not say blazes, but there are blazes where he said.

"By George, I knew it!" he cried. "Quick! quick! Out with it! Nothing's too desperate for me to-night."

"That's good," chuckled Bull. "Very good. Come, let us go and take a walk. This is a long story; and no one must overhear it, either."

Such is the effect of bad motives upon men. Those two precious rascals stooped instinctively as they hurried down the company street and dodged out of camp.

Bull led his company down through "Flirtation Walk" and out to the far end of it. Here they scrambled down the hillside until they were in a lonely, deserted glen almost at the river's edge. It was already growing dark with the shadows of the evening. And here Bull stopped and took a seat.

"I hope this is quiet enough for you," said Murray.

"I had an especial reason for bringing you here!" responded Bull. "All I've got to tell you about happened here. Do you know, old man, I jumped into the river off that high bank last night."

"What!" gasped the other. "For Heaven's sake, why?"

"That's in the story," answered Harris. "I'll begin at the beginning. Listen. You remember how I told you a month ago when that plebe Mallory first came here, how Meg Adams and I had a quarrel and that fool came along and knocked me down."

"You never told me what you were doing," said Murray.

"Never mind. I was a fool to try it, that way. Anyhow, she's hated me ever since. And oh, how she has struggled to get that plebe. Murray, I'm smarter than you think. I've been watching this business night and day, waiting for my chance. And now it's come. I found that plebe and Meg on this very spot just before taps last night."

"What doing?" gasped Murray.

"I never lose a chance to hear one of Mallory's conversations," growled Bull in a low tone. "I crept down here and listened; and this was what I heard. It seemed that Mallory didn't care two straws for her—she's probably not his kind. She was simply wild after him, and she had gotten so desperate that she had confessed the whole business to that cowboy chum of Mark's, 'Texas.' What must he do but go and tell Mark right off. And then Mark had come down here to see her. Well, she saw that Mark didn't propose to have any love-making business in his, and, Gus, she was simply wild. She's a perfect tiger, that girl. I never saw a woman so furious in my life. She tore around this place, and wept and shrieked—she was so jealous and so angry! And, by George, I'll be hanged if

she didn't end it by flinging herself head first over that bank!"

"What!" gasped Murray.

"Yes, sir. And then I saw my chance. Oh, it was a bonanza for me, Gus. Mallory was lame, you know, and he hesitated. I rushed past him and saved her life. Throwing in some heroic flourishes, so's to have the right effect upon her. I carried her out, and upbraided him as a coward. He was lame, I knew, and couldn't do anything if he wanted to. And it made her hate him all the more."

"How did it turn out?"

"Splendidly. He went back to camp, and I took her all the way home. And you can bet I fixed it all right with her on the way. I made up for what she was mad about before; and I talked about Mallory and that other girl until she was wild. And, Gus, we've got her!"

"Got her for what?" "Mallory! She's our tool, man; we can do just what we please. She'll do anything on earth for revenge. I almost think she'd kill him."

"You don't mean," gasped Gus, "that she's going to swear he pushed her into the river?"

"She wanted to," said Bull. "Oh, Murray, you can't imagine how simply desperate that girl was. She'd simply thrown herself at Mallory's feet, and he'd kicked her away. At least that was the way it seemed to her, and you can bet I didn't try to change her view. And she was crying with rage all the way home. Her face was simply scarlet, and she was trembling like a leaf. I was honestly afraid of her. She vowed she'd swear to anything I said if she could only ruin him, and to get that Grace Fuller away from him. She said she'd swear to it and stick to it that he tried to murder her. She was even mad because I wouldn't let her."

"Why didn't you?" cried the other.

"In the first place, I doubt if the superintendent would believe her. There have been several plots like that tried, but he has too much faith in that fool of a plebe. Then, too, I doubt if the girl's rage'll last that long. We must use it while it does. All we want to do is to get that plebe dismissed."

"That's all!" exclaimed Murray. "But in Heaven's name, how?"

"Didn't I tell you I had a plot?"

"Yes, but what? and when?"

"To-night!" cried Bull! "To-night! And I want you to help us."

Murray sprang up in excitement and joy. Bull hushed his exclamations, and after glancing cautiously about him to make sure that no one was near in that now black and shadowy glade, went on in a low, muttering tone.

"It's very simple," he whispered. "It's because it's so simple it's sure to work. It won't leave Mallory the ghost of a chance. I'm just as sure, man, sure as I stand on this spot of ground, that Mallory will be court-martialed in a week."

"What is it?" cried Murray.

"Listen. Meg's going to write him a letter to-night, send it to him about midnight, asking him to come to her. Then —"

"But will he come?"

"Certainly. We can make it strong. She will. She can say she's dying, anything to make sure. He'll go. She lives beyond cadet limits. Some of us'll be there, catch him, tie him, kill him—anything, I don't care. And I know the girl don't. I think she'd tear his eyes out. Anyhow, we'll fix him there, beyond limits, and then back to camp we go, make some infernal racket and have the tac out in no time. Then there'll be an inspection, and Mallory'll be 'hived' absent after taps. They'll ask him next morning where he's been, and he'll tell."

"He may lie."

"He won't. He couldn't. I know him too well. And he'll be court-martialed, and there you are!"

And Gus Murray leaped up with a cry of joy. He seized his companion by the hand.

"That's it!" he cried. "That's it! By Heaven, it'll do him! And if there's any blame to bear that fool of a girl shall bear it."

CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH THE PLOT SUCCEEDS.

That beautiful July evening, while those precious rascals sat whispering and discussing the details of their plan, while first classmen and yearlings were all down in the Academy Building at the "hop," a certain plebe sat in a tent of Company A, all by himself. A candle flickered be-

side him, and he held a writing pad in his hand. The plebe was Mark Mallory, his clearcut, handsome features shining in the yellow light.

"Dear Mother," he was writing. "It is hard for one to get time to write a letter here. We plebes have so much to do. But I have promised you to write once a week, and so I have stolen off from my friends to drop you a line.

"This is the fifth letter I have written now, the close of the fifth week. And I like West Point as much as I ever did. You know how much that is. You know how I have worked and striven for this chance I have. West Point has always been the goal of all my hopes, and I am still happy to have reached it. If I should forfeit my chance now it would be by my own fault, I think; I know that it would break my heart.

"We plebes have to work hard nowadays. They wake us up at five with a big gun, and after that it is drill all day. But I like it, for I am learning lots of things. If you could see me sweeping and dusting I know you would laugh. Texas says if 'the boys' saw him they'd lynch him 'sho.'

"I told you a lot about Texas the last time I wrote. He is the most delightful character I have ever met in my life. He is just fresh from the plains, and his cowboy ways of looking at things keep me laughing all day. But he is just as true as steel, and as fine a friend as I ever knew.

"I believe I told you all about the Seven Devil, the secret society we have gotten up to stop hazing. Well, we are having high jinks with 'the durnation ole ya'rlin's,' as Texas calls them. We have outwitted them at every point, and I think they are about ready to give up in despair. We plebes even went to the hop the other night. I can hear the music of the hop now as it comes over the parade ground. It is very alluring, so you must appreciate this letter all the more.

"I shan't tell you about the fight I had, for it would worry you. And I haven't time to tell you how I saved the life of a girl last week. I inclose a newspaper clipping about it, but you mustn't believe it was so absurdly heroic. The girl's father is a very rich man here, and,

mother, she is simply beautiful. Texas tells me I am very much in love with her; perhaps I am. Texas ought to know best. She is certainly very sweet and attractive. She has joined the Seven Devils to help me fool the yearlings.

"I guess I shall have to stop now. I hear some sounds that make me think it is time for tattoo, and besides, I am getting very homesick, writing to you way out in Colorado. You need not be fearing any rival to my affections, mother dear, even if I am fond of Grace Fuller. I wish I could see you just once to-night to tell you how much I miss you. And I am still.

Your devoted son,

"Mark."

The plebe laid down his pencil with a sigh. He folded the letter and sealed it, and then rose slowly to his feet. Outside of his tent he heard quick steps and voices, and a moment later the rattle of a drum broke forth.

"Tattoo," he observed. "I thought so."

He turned toward the door as the flap was pushed aside—and a tall, slender lad entered, a lad with bronzed, sun-tanned features and merry gray eyes.

"Hello, Texas!" said Mark.

"Hello," growled Texas. "Look a yere! What do you mean by runnin' off an' hidin' all evenin'? I been a huntin' you everywhere."

"I've been right here," said Mark, "writing a letter home. Did you want me to go to the hop?"

"No, I didn't. But I wanted you to tell me all 'bout that crazy Meg Adams last night an' what you did. You ain't had time to tell me all day."

Mark told him the story then. They were still discussing it when they turned out and lined up for roll call; and that ceremony being over, they scattered again, Texas still, eagerly asking questions about the strange affair.

There were two other occupants to that A Company tent, "The Parson" and "Sleepy." The other three members of the Seven Devils had a tent to themselves in the B Company street, a tent just to the rear of Mark's. The four in Mark's tent were still talking about Meg and her unpleasant temper when taps sounded half an hour later—ten o'clock—

"lights out and all quiet." They stopped then.

Sentry No. 3 that night was "Baby" Edwards, Bull's faithful friend and imitator.

His beat lay along the northern edge of the camp, skirting the tents of Company A. And Baby Edwards let quite a number pass his beat that night.

For instance, he was on duty from midnight until two. It was bright moonlight then, and Baby could have seen any one who crossed his post; but he heard a signaling whistle and faced out in order not to. The person who entered was a boy clad in a blue uniform, an "orderly," as they are called.

He ran silently and swiftly in and made straight for one tent. When he got there he hesitated not a moment, but stepped in and crept up to one of the sleepers.

It was Mark Mallory who awoke at his touch, and Mark sat up in alarm and stared at him.

"Sh!" said the boy. "Sh! Don't wake any one."

"What do you want?" Mark demanded.

"I've a letter, sir, a letter from her again."

Mark stared at the boy and recognized him at once as a messenger who had given him a note from Meg Adams about a month ago. And he sprang to his feet in surprise.

"She writing again!" he whispered. "Quick, give it to me."

He broke the seal, stepped to the tent door, where, in the white moonlight, he could read every letter plainly. And this was what he saw:

"Dear Mr. Mallory:—Oh, once more I have to write you to call upon you for aid. You cannot imagine the terrible distress I am in. And I have no one to call upon but you. I do not say if you love me, but if you even respect me as a woman, come to my aid to-night, and at once. And come alone, for I could not bear to have any one but you know of my terrible affliction. Oh, please do not fail me! You may imagine my state of mind when I write you like this. And let me call myself

"Your friend, Mary Adams."

Mark finished the reading of that letter in amazement, even alarm.

"Did she give you this?" he demanded of the boy.

"Yes, sir, she did, not five minutes

ago," replied the lad. "And she told me to run. She seemed scared to death, sir, and I know she'd been crying."

Mark stared into his earnest face a moment, and then he turned away in thought.

"You may go," he said to the boy. "I know my way to her house alone."

The lad disappeared; and Mark, without a moment's hesitation, went over and woke one of the cadets.

"Wake up, Texas," he whispered. "Wake up and read this."

Texas arose from his couch in surprise and sleepy alarm. He read the letter, gasping; then he stared at Mark.

"Do you think she wrote it?" he inquired.

That problem was puzzling Mark, too. He had received two letters before from that girl, under exactly similar circumstances. One had been a trick of the cadets to lure him out. The other had been genuine, and had resulted in Mark's saving the girl's brother from disgrace and ruin. But which was this?

Mark made up his mind quickly.

"I think she wrote it, old man," he said. "The drum-boy who gave me this gave me the other she wrote, too, and he swears she wrote this. He said she was frightened and crying. Texas, she lives way off there with her old mother, who's blind and helpless. And there's no telling what may have happened to her. Just see how urgent that note is. I must go, old man. I'd be a coward if I didn't. She don't know a soul to call on but me."

And Mark, generous and noble to a fault, had turned and begun to fling on his clothing. Texas was doing likewise.

"I'm a-goin', too," he vowed.

"She says not," whispered Mark.

"I know," was the answer. "She ain't a-goin' to know it. I'm a-goin' in case it's them durnation ole yearlin's. Ef I see it's all right, and she wrote it, I reckon I kin sneak home."

Nothing could deter the faithful and vigilant Texan from his resolution, and when Mark stole out of his tent his friend was at his heels. They passed the sentry, Baby Edwards, with the usual signal, Mark fooled for once, was chuckling at his deception, thinking Baby

thought them yearlings. But Baby knew who it was, and laughed.

The two, once clear of camp, set out on a dead run. They dashed across the cavalry plain and down the road to Highland Falls. It was nearly a mile to where Meg Adams lived, but Mark never stopped once, not even when he came to the dreaded cadet limits, to be found beyond which meant court-martial and dismissal in disgrace. He took the risk grimly, however, and ran on. When they finally reached the girl's house the Texan was panting and exhausted.

"You stay there," whispered Mark, pointing to a clump of bushes nearby.

Texas crouched behind them, and doubled his fists in determination. Mark just as promptly stepped up to the door and softly rapped.

There was a light in one of the rooms on the ground floor. The curtain was carefully drawn, but Texas, watching closely, saw a shadow swiftly flit across. And just after that the door was flung open, and the girl stood before them.

"I knew you would come!" Texas heard her cry. "Oh, thank Heaven!"

Then Mark stepped inside, and the door shut again.

Texas waited in suspense and curiosity. He did not know how long Mark might be in there, but he was resolved to stick it out. Then suddenly, to his surprise, the door was opened again, and Mark and the girl stepped out.

She was leaning upon his arm, and hurrying him forward quickly. She was evidently in great distress, and from what the hidden listener heard, Mark was striving his best to comfort her. The two figures hurried across the clearing and vanished in the woods. Texas arose from his position.

"I reckon it's all right," he muttered. "It's durnation mysterious, but there's nothin' mo' fo' me to do."

And suiting the action to the word the faithful Southerner turned and set out rapidly for camp.

Which ended Mark Mallory's last chance of escape.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ALARM AT CAMP M'PHERSON.

Mark Mallory when he entered "Meg"

Adams' house found her standing before him, a picture of misery and fright. He demanded to know what was wrong.

"Come, come!" the girl cried. "Quick. I cannot tell you. Oh! Come and see."

She flung a shawl about her shoulders, seized Mark by the arm in a convulsive grip, and together they hurried through the woods.

It was a little footpath they followed. Mark had no idea where they were going in the deep black darkness. He abandoned himself entirely to the girl's guidance, trusting that no slight matter could have taken her there. And he was right.

The girl said not a word during the trip. She kept her face hidden in the shawl, and only a sob told Mark the state of her feelings. He was growing more mystified and curious every moment.

On, on they went. They must have been hurrying continually for at least five minutes, the girl dragging the cadet faster and faster. And then suddenly she turned and left the path.

There was a dense thicket before them; she paused not a moment to hesitate, but plunged into the midst of it. The briars tore her clothing and hands, but she forced her way in. And when they were in the very centre, without a word, she stopped and faced about.

She pushed aside her veil and hair and stared wildly at Mark. He gazed at her blood-red, burning cheeks and saw her black eyes glitter.

"What is the matter?" he cried.

She made not a sound, but suddenly to Mark's infinite horror flung herself upon him and wrapped her arms about his neck.

"Why, Miss Adams," he gasped, "I——"

His words stuck in his throat. His surprise changed to the wildest dismay and consternation. For he felt a pair of sinewy arms flung about his ankles, binding his feet together as in a vise. He had only one free arm, the other being bound to his chest with the bandages of the surgeon; the free arm was seized by the wrist with a grip that almost crushed it. And to his mouth another pair of hands were pressed, making outcry impossible as it would have been futile anyway.

Mark Mallory was as motionless and helpless as if he had been turned to stone!

The swift emotions that surged through his excited brain defy description. He saw the plot in an instant, apprehended it in all its fiendish heartlessness; and he knew that he was ruined. He could not see behind him; he could not identify his assailants; but he was sure they were cadets, Bull and his crowd leagued with this wretched girl to play upon his kind-heartedness.

And that girl! Oh, what a figure she was! She made no attempt to hide herself, however much Bull Harris might. She stood before her helpless victim's eyes a perfect figure of vengeance and triumph.

There is a famous painting by Sichel of the Grecian Sorceress, Medea. The woman is standing clad in white that contrasts with her jet black hair. In one hand, half hidden, she clutches a shining dagger; her mouth is set in a firm, determined way, and her eyes are dark and gleaming. Imagine that figure in the moment of victory, every feature convulsed with joy, with hatred gratified, and that is the girl Meg Adams. She was dancing about Mark in fury, flinging her hands in his face, taunting him, jeering at him, threatening him so as to frighten even the desperate cadets.

They, meanwhile, were working quickly; they bound his legs together, his arms to his side. They forced a gag into his mouth, and then lastly shut off his view of the wildly shrieking girl by tying a handkerchief about his eyes. And then they tumbled him to the ground and turned away and left him.

Mary Adams stayed behind them a moment to vent her fury upon the helpless prisoner.

"Satisfied!" she cried. "How do you like it? I told you I would have revenge. I told you I hated you! And now, and now it is mine! You are mine, too! Do you hear me? I can do what I please with you. I can kill you. And I ought, you dog!"

Mark could not see her, but he felt a stinging pain in his cheek and he felt the warm blood flow.

The girl's sharp heel had cut his flesh.

And a moment later he heard a low voice mutter:

"Come away, you fool! Come on."

They dragged her reluctantly with them. Mark heard the steps recede into the distance, heard the silence settling down about the place. They had left him alone, deserted and helpless, lost in the midst of the woods, left him to die for all he knew, certainly to be missed, to be expelled, to be ruined.

And the poor fellow groaned within him as he realized the triumph of his enemies.

Texas made his way back to camp in silence. Texas felt it was none of his business, and yet he could not help trying to guess the errand upon which those two had gone. It was certainly a mystery. Texas reached the camp without succeeding in forming the least guess.

He raced past the same sentry in the same style as usual. He entered his tent and found the other two "devils" sleeping soundly, having not the least suspicion of the night's occurrences.

"I reckon," he mused, reflectively, "there ain't much use o' my sittin' round. I'll go to bed."

With which resolution he undressed and lay down to sleep.

After such an exciting and lively half-hour as the one Texas had just spent, one does not usually drop off to sleep very easily. It was fortunate that Texas did not; wide awake as he was, he had a cooler and steadier head to think when the hour of trial came. For the "hour of trial" was coming very soon now.

Bull Harris and his cowardly allies first took the precaution to calm the angry girl, and then set out on a run for camp. Their hearts were beating high with hope and triumph. Their time had come at last; their enemy was theirs, and theirs without any blame falling on them. It was a great day for the vengeful Bull.

They passed their sentry ally in safety and vanished in their tents. In a minute more they were all safely in bed, as Texas was, and then the time had come.

"Texas, lying in his silent tent, was just beginning to doze, when suddenly came a wild yell that shook the air, that made the hills to echo. It rang through

the sleeping camp, and it was followed by a series of shouts.

"Help! help! help!"

The place was in an uproar in an instant; and Texas was almost paralyzed with horror. An alarm! The camp awake! Inspection! And Mark, his Mark, his friend and hero, absent!

He sprang to his feet with a hoarse cry; at the same moment the other two plebes sat up and stared about them wildly.

"What's that?" cried one.

"Mark's gone!" fairly shrieked Texas.

"Mark gone! How?"

"He's out of bounds! Great Heavens, he went to see Meg Adams! And he'll be found out!"

The two crowded about him, their faces pale with fright, their eyes staring.

Mark gone! Mark, their leader! What on earth would they do?

The Texan's wild exclamation had been heard in the Company B tent to the rear, and its occupants had rushed in regardless of rules, of discovery, of everything. An alarm! An inspection! And Mark beyond limits!

Things were happening with incredible swiftness outside. The shouts had been echoed by excited inquiries from awakened cadets, by the cries of sentries for the corporal of the guard, and by the quick, sharp commands of officers.

Lieutenant Allen, the "tac" in command, had sprung up from his bed at the very first cry. And in half a minute more, dressed and with lighted lantern in his hand, he was rushing down the company street.

"What's the matter?" he cried.

No one knew. He saw cadets gathered in almost every tent door, staring out anxiously. Thus he did not notice the state of affairs in Mark's tent, where six horrified, frightened plebes were huddled, gasping.

Night alarms had been getting too frequent at Camp McPherson that year, and had excited the ire of the authorities. The lieutenant meant to find out the authors of this one, if such a thing were within the realms of possibility.

First he thought of sounding the "long roll," the fire or mutiny signal, summoning the cadets out on the street for roll call. Then it occurred to him that an in-

spection of the tents might do better. Another "tac," Lieutenant Ross, had joined him at this moment. And without a moment's delay, the two set to work. And Lieutenant Allen started with Company A, the very street in which Mark Mallory's tent stood!

A thousand wild plans had occurred to the six, to Texas in particular. He might "hold up" the tac, prevent the inspection! Or dress up as Mark and have himself reported! Great Heavens! he must do something.

The officer began at the head of the street. He flashed his lantern into the first tent, counting the sleepers and noting that nothing was disturbed. Then he came to the second, to the third, the fourth, and so on down. It was the work of but one second to glance into each. It would take but five seconds more to reach Mark's, to note the fact that there were but three in that tent, and that Cadet Mallory was absent out of camp, out of limits!

Texas turned to his comrades as the officer drew near. There were tears in Texas' eyes, and his voice was choked.

"You fellows," he said, to the three from the B tent, "you—you'd better go back, or you'll get soaked, too."

Nearer still came the officer. One tent more! The three had turned to go—and then suddenly Texas uttered a cry of joy and staggered back against the tent wall! An instant later he leaped forward, seized Dewey, one of the three, by the shoulders and fairly flung him to the ground.

"Lie there! Lie there!" he gasped, hoarsely. "Durnation!"

Dewey, quick as a wink, saw the ruse. The other two, confused and frightened, dashed across to their tent and hid, wondering what was up, what Texas was trying to do. But Dewey slid into the blankets that made Mark's "bed," drew the sheet over him, all but his head, and then lay still, gasping and trembling like a leaf.

Texas and other two sprang for their places and imitated him. And an instant

later the white light of the officer's lantern flashed into the tent.

The four held their breath; their hearts fairly ceased to beat as the tac glanced around. He saw a tent undisturbed; he saw Texas, and the Parson, and Sleepy; and he saw the brown curly hair of the fourth occupant, lying upon his stomach, his face turned away from the light.

A second more and he passed on; and the four almost fainted with the reaction of relief.

It was not over yet, though. "Allen" had two more tents to visit up that row, and then he would turn to B Company. Texas peered out and watched him reach the last tent, and then uttered a whispered "Now!"

Quick as a flash, Dewey slid under the wall at the rear, whisked across the open space, and dived into his own tent—safe!

The camp settled down into quietness a few minutes after that. But the six never slept another wink. Mark had escaped that danger, he was safe for a moment. But another alarm might come any moment! And reveille was sure to come in a few hours! And where was Mark?

Texas, ever sly, had become suspicious by that time; ever bold and faithful, he lost not a moment in hesitation. He left camp again! He ran straight to Meg Adams' house, and from it straight out the path he had seen the two take. It was a forlorn hope, but it met with fulfillment. Texas heard a low groan, the only signal Mark could make when he heard the step of a possible rescuer.

And in half an hour more Mark Mallory was back in camp again, safe, telling to his furious friends the tale of his betrayal and hearing from them the tale of his "escape."

[THE END.]

The next West Point novelette by Lieutenant Frederick Garrison will be entitled "Mark Mallory's Strange Find; or, The Secret of the Counterfeiter's Cave." No. 24 Army and Navy.

JULES VASCO THE TERRIBLE;

OR,

The Strange Story of Michel Vancouver, Student.



I SWUNG OUT OVER THE TERRIBLE ABYSS AS A MAN SWINGS UPON A TRAPEZE (page 1083)

THE balloon shot up from the Zoological Gardens at Antwerp, and many hundred pipes came from many hundred mouths, and many hundred guttural exclamations gave luck to the aeronaut. It seemed to me a commonplace exhibition enough, and when I had watched the car pass into a belt of clouds that lay low upon the city, I turned to Michel, and suggested other pastime. But there he was again, as white as the ghost of cheap romance, a very bundle of fears, and he leaned so heavily upon me that I was convinced he was going to faint, and implored him to remember where he was, as people often do when another man is ill or dying, and chooses a ridiculously public place for the performance.

When we had dined together at the Hotel de l'Europe that night, I tackled Michel Vancouver in earnest.

"You are the most ridiculous compound of contrasts that ever I met with," said I. "Ever since you left town you have turned the color of whitewash at the

mere mention of a climb; and I expect nightly to hear of your going giddy when you get upstairs to bed. Yet, in other things, I don't know a man who can hold his own with you for pluck. It's a paradox, Mike, and it interferes with my digestion so much that unless you solve the riddle I shall never be able to learn German, to say nothing of Dutch."

Michel puffed hard at his cigar when he had heard me out; and called for another bock.

"Did I never mention anything about it to you?" he asked, as he sipped from the long, green glass.

"Never a word; probably because I didn't ask you. Is it a very strange story then?"

"It's curious, to say the least of it. When that dirty waiter has removed himself, I'll tell you a bit of it, and you shall judge; but fill your glass first, and then we can have this corner to ourselves."

I did as he told me, and waited for him. The presence of other people seemed to annoy him, and he paused until the smoking-room was almost empty before he began to tell me the story I now write for you.

And while he spoke, I closed my eyes and listened in dumb amazement that such a thing should have happened, and no man should have known a word about it.

It is five years ago, said he, since I left the army school. I should have stayed another year, and might have been in a cavalry regiment now if an accident had not happened to me. You may not have heard of it; but the common story went that I fell out of a balloon just as it was reaching ground, and was so upset by the shock that I had to give up all work for a year. That's the tale everyone heard; but I'll tell you what really did happen; and you may then ask yourself if I have, or have not, good cause to look silly when a height is mentioned.

The day I came to grief was the day after a man named Jules Vasco, a Canadian, as he called himself, came to the little village of Crayford to assist the annual fair with a balloon ascent. I was walking through the village late in the afternoon when I saw this dirty-looking rascal sitting outside of the inn drinking with the country fellows, and no doubt telling them fine lies, for their mouths were as wide open as barn doors, and their 'Ohs!' you could hear half way up the street.

What made me stop I don't know. I think it was because I saw old Squire Wells listening to the fellow's bunkum; and waited a moment to speak to him. When he left me, the balloonist was in the middle of a fine yarn, and I stayed there to hear it.

"Gentlemen," said he—this, mind you, to a dozen of the type illiterate—"Gentlemen, what do you know of life? Pardon me, you know nothing. Come with me and we will touch the stars together; we will put our hands on the golden orb of the moon; we will look behind the blue sky, and see other worlds—come with me; pay a quarter to get admission to my enclosure to-morrow, and you shall feed your eyes on the mighty machine which splits the heavens and brings man nearer to the great cities which are above the skies. You do not know me, you look surprised? but I am Jules Vasco—Vasco the Terrible; you will see that when you read my advertisements—Vasco, the conqueror of the stars and the planets. And if one of you, brave above his friends, would mount upwards with me, let him pay a golden eagle, and my mysteries shall be his mysteries, and he shall triumph with me."

He drank about a quart of beer after this to wash the mysteries down; and I thought that if he had any intention to put his hand on the golden orb of the moon, he might wash it first, for it was exceedingly dirty. His last words, however, interested me. I had never been up in a balloon; here was the opportunity. I knew that old Barker, our teacher, would be just mad at the idea, and so I resolved to clinch the thing there and then, when none of our fellows were about.

"I say, old chap," I exclaimed in a moment of enthusiasm, "what time do you go up to-morrow; and is it really a go?"

He waved his hand with lofty grace.

"This gentleman commands," he said, addressing the bumpkins again; "we shall ascend together. I shall take him up, I shall put him down. He will go away from you to look upon other men and other worlds; he will return to dine as a babe from a cradle. For a quarter you will see us mount, for nothing you will see him come down again—I, Vasco, say it."

No doubt he meant business. I stopped all his blarney, and took him aside to arrange things. He offered to take me up at two o'clock next day, wind and weather permitting; and to put me down, if possible, within twenty miles of Crayford. Then he borrowed a quarter of me to get his dinner, and I knew that Vasco the Terrible was also terribly hard up.

I was awfully keen on the adventure—that you may imagine, or I shouldn't have gone up in a balloon with a man whom I had never seen before, or with one who began business by borrowing money. But I remember I was only seventeen, and headstrong as most of us at that age. It did not occur to me that I was doing a very foolish thing; and when I arrived at the enclosure in the fair on the following afternoon, and found a dozen men holding the ropes of a great balloon, while Vasco, as dirty as ever, was making a forty-horse power harangue to a crowd of country people who considered it part of their day's enjoyment to believe every word he said, I jumped into the car without a thought, and responded to the cheers that

greeted my appearance with a wave of my hand and a hearty "Au revoir."

The moment Vasco was in the car with me he bawled, "Let her go," in rough English, which was quite free from that curious accent he had used on the previous afternoon. This should have made me suspicious at once, but I did not notice it, for the ground seemed falling away below me, and while there was an utter absence of motion in the car, I saw the land laid out as in a panorama, and the crowd in the enclosure become as a black spot in the vast expanse of green.

Now with a gentle sway as the breeze caught us, now still, and yet with a curious sensation as of aerial suspension, the car was dragged upwards—upwards until the hedges could no longer be seen in the fields, and there were no trees, but only dots of darker hue against the background of green and little mirrors of bright light where the brilliant sun struck lake or river. A fascinating spectacle, yet one to make the budding aeronaut quake, and cling to the side of the frail basket as to life itself. So I clung, afraid to admit my fear, and I looked at Vasco for the first time since we had started.

The car was so narrow that our knees almost touched. There was a rough seat all round it, leaving a space for some instruments, and a great jar of liquor from which the Canadian helped himself freely. When I looked him straight in the face there was a devilish twinkle in his eyes, which I noticed for the first time. His face was marked by an expression which, if it meant anything, meant malicious triumph. What should cause it, I knew not, but from that time I turned sick with fear. It seemed to me that I was already some thousands of feet in the air with a drunkard or a scoundrel, and to get down again without exciting the man's suspicions was from that moment alone in my thoughts.

We must have mounted so for five minutes when the silence was broken. Vasco spoke, and in his miserable English.

"What time is it?" he asked. "You've got a clock on you, I see; pull her out, will you?"

I looked at my watch—a fine repeater, given to me on my seventeenth birthday by my father—and I told him that the time was a quarter to three.

"That's all right," he said with an attempt at rude jocularity; "and you may as well give that old kettle pan of a timepiece to me to take care of—you might drop it overboard, you know. We're a goodish height up ain't we?"

He had put off all disguise when he said this, and he meant to imply that he was going to rob me.

It was this bold-faced way of doing things probably that brought all the after trouble upon me. If I had given him my watch and money there and then, he might have put me on the ground whole; but I always had something of the bull-dog in me, as you know, and directly I saw his intention I replaced my watch in my pocket and folded my arms, waiting for him.

"Well," he said, after a pause. "it's light, is it, my bantam cock? Now, look here, I've took a good many up rich, and brought 'em down again poor, but they saved their necks, which, I guess, is more than you'll do, unless you fork out sharp. You can get off then as soon as you like, and tell the police—ba, ha! I shall drop you presently, and you can run home by the next train—when you've borrowed the money."

I was in a rare state of fear at this, for the man was twice my size, strong with drink, fierce-looking, and ready, I saw, to go to the length of murdering me if he could get a dollar by it.

We were together in a car not more than five feet across, and the earth was thousands of feet below us, looking now like a fairy scene which glowed under generous sunshine, and was as though set with gems and light.

But I kept my head and answered him:

"You may do what you like, but you will never have my watch or my money. And what's more, I'm going down—do you understand?—so you'll pull that rope at once."

His laugh at this was uproarious, but he took the valve-line in his hand, and, as if by way of answer, he threw bags of sand over, and the balloon bounded up like a bird, entering a cloud of white mist which hid the earth and rolled upon us in damp and chilling waves.

"Now," he said, as he rose from his seat and made a step towards me, "now where's that clock?"

As he rose, I rose, and being quick with my fists, I hit him full in the face, and sent him reeling against the wickerwork. But it was only a momentary advantage, for he had whipped out a great clasp-knife before I had recovered from the effort of the blow, and I saw that he meant to stab me, and to throw my body overboard.

In that awful minute when the terrible strain on my ears and my quick respiration told me what a height we had reached, the car, which should have been my safety, was nothing but a haven of death; and as Vasco made a wild stab at me, I sprang at the ropes above and clung there. Then he reached out to strike my feet, but I kicked the weapon from his hand, and he could do nothing but try to reach me and curse in two languages.

Yet think of my situation. I had grasped the cords which circled the great silken bag, and while I held on to them with a grip which was almost maniacal, I could get no hold for my feet, and I swung out over that terrible abyss as a man swings upon a trapeze.

We passed from the cloud whose enveloping volume hid the terrible sight below somewhat from me, and then the agony which haunts me to this day, and will ever haunt me, began.

My weight pulled the balloon toward me, yet all my heart-breaking struggles did not give me rest for my feet. To look down I dare not; the horrid words kept singing in my ears: "You must fall!"

I remembered stories of men who had dropped great heights—from the Matterhorn, from Mount Blanc yet what were such falls to the one before me? And should I keep consciousness as I went down, or would death come to me ere yet I struck the earth with that crushing and splintering thud of flesh and bone?

The reflection made me clutch the cords with renewed frenzy. I tried to dig my hands even into the silk for hold, but could grasp nothing. Vasco I did not see, but his fierce shouts from time to time forbade all thought of return to the car.

I knew that I was getting faint, my arms ached so that every moment I feared I should let go from sheer weariness, the veins of my hands swelled up so that they looked like great cords—and below, ten thousand feet, was the earth, all smiling in the sunlight—the land where my broken body should lie.

Nothing could tell you the terror of those moments, or the agony of them as I swayed to and fro.

At last I think I must have fainted right off, for I enjoyed a moment's complete unconsciousness—and

when I awoke I was hanging by one hand to the balloon, and the other was paralyzed at my side.

In my struggles I had wedged my left wrist in between the silk and the cords, and so saved my life when insensibility came to me. Yet this position was worse than the other—I was so weak that I could not struggle up to get both hands upon the netting. The knot which held me might untie at any moment, and then—

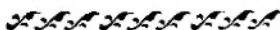
Almost hysterical with the suffering, I should have welcomed any less terrible death than that of the awful fall, and was, indeed, half of a mind to face all and cast myself away from the balloon, when I made a curious discovery. A cord, damp and clammy, was blown against my face. I followed it mechanically with my eye, and saw that it was the valve-cord communicating with the air. Chance and the tilt of the silk had put it into my hands. I gave one pull upon it, and heard loud cries from the ruffian in the car as I did so; but we began to go down—down, with great lurches which might at any moment have dashed me free, yet down to the ground I coveted with a madman's greed. Then I saw that my inexperience had caused me to let out too much gas, and that we were descending at a terrific pace while Vasco was hurling out sandbags for his life.

What really happened in the descent I don't know to this day. I remember only that I was hurled through the air with a great swaying which hid everything from my eyes, and that the downward motion was more delicious than anything I have experienced.

Have you ever jumped into water from a high place, and felt the delight of that wild careering through the air, that longing to go on falling for ever? Well, that was what I felt as we rushed toward earth, and in one prolonged and perfect moment trees sprang up from dots, houses from space, even men and women from crawling insects on the green. Then, just for a second, the balloon paused, and with a fearful bang it left me in the middle of a ploughed field.

They told me this after, when the doctor set my dislocated shoulder. They picked me up insensible in the field, but Vasco lay beside me with his brains dashed out. He had thrown the last bag of sand when we were fifty feet above the ground, and although that had checked the deadly descent, the balloon had yet struck the earth with a fierce blow, bringing insensibility and a dislocated arm—the one wedged in the cord, by the way—to me, and death to Vasco the Terrible.

And that's why heights funk me. Is it a good reason, eh?



HERE'S A SONG FOR THE WHEEL.

Here's a song for the wheel,
With its sinews of steel
And its thews which shall mock at the longest
day's journey;

None shall equal the speed
Of this tireless steed
Tho' he ride with the skill of a knight in the
tourney.

Here's a song for the wheel
And the dull pulse shall feel
All the fervor and glow of its youth come
a-throbbing;

The blood shall be rife
With a riotous life
And shall surge in shrunk veins which the years
have been robbing.

Here's a song for the wheel,
And the vision shall reel
As we dash like a flash from the hill to the hollow;
The wide welkin shall ring

With the welcome we bring
To the home of the stream and the haunt of the
swallow.

Here's a song for the wheel,
As in silence we steal
Like the wraiths of the wood 'mid the mists of
the morning;

But swifter our flight
Thro' the gloom of the night
Than the stars which shall shine till the morrow's
fair dawning.

Here's a song for the wheel
While the merry bells peal
In a chime long and loud for the steed true and
peerless;

Like winds of the North
His riders go forth
In the strength of the strong and the joy of the
fearless.

—J. H. MEAD, in *Criteria*.

IN FORBIDDEN NEPAUL



Author of "A Legacy of Peril," etc., etc.

("IN FORBIDDEN NEPAUL" was commenced in No. 15. Back numbers can be obtained from all newsdealers.)

CHAPTER XXVI.

A CLEVER TRICK.

The leopard, confronted thus unexpectedly by the possibility of freedom, seized the chance as swiftly as its liberator could have wished, and before any one discovered what had been done. While the gate still quivered and creaked on its hinges, the beautiful creature bounded lightly from the cage, disregarding the close presence of Hawksmoor and Nigel. Instantly, with a cry that was half snarl and half roar, it made a second spring toward the middle of the court, pouncing on one of a group of passing natives, and bearing the luckless man to the floor.

The scene of confusion and terror that followed exceeded Hawksmoor's most sanguine expectations, and indeed he feared at first that the whirlwind he had let loose might result disastrously to himself and his companion. There was no warning. The first intimation of the peril was the roar of the leopard—the scream of its prostrate victim. Those nearest the spot made no effort to rescue the man, but fled with the rest.

In a moment the court was given over to the wildest excitement and panic, and the disguised Englishmen were quite forgotten. With hoarse clamor and yells of fright, the natives fled in whatever direction chance guided their footsteps—some to the main exit, some towards the narrow passages at the side—while others lost their heads and darted aimlessly to and fro. And the priests, mixed up in the throng, were not the least terrified. The Thibetan mastiffs, straining hard at their chains, added to the general din by loud and savage barking. The nabob's elephant trumpeted furiously, and in the outer court, where the alarm and confusion had instantly spread, the horses were galloping madly about at risk of life and limb.

In the meantime, while the panic held sway, the Englishmen lurked for a moment or two by the empty cage, waiting for an opportunity better than they had yet been offered. And their chance was not long delayed. Simultaneously one of the mastiff broke loose and made for the leopard, and the elephant took it into his head to stampede across the court. The bound pounced pluckily on the leopard, and they rolled snarling and growling among the still-fleeing people: with shrill and angry trumpeting the big quadruped charged like a fury on the combatants, knocking down and trampling more than one helpless native who got in the way.

Under such circumstances, in such a turmoil of panic and noise, the golden statue of Durgadeva itself might have been stolen from its pedestal and carried bodily off without a witness to the deed. So it was an easy matter for Hawksmoor and Nigel—the former taking the lead—to slip unobserved behind the drapery that hung in the rear of the shrine—a place of refuge which fortunately none others had thought to take advantage of.

Here the fugitives found themselves in a dimly-lit space, with bronze gates in front of them, and on either side a small door set in the wall. Hawksmoor turned to the one on the left, and it opened readily, revealing a

narrow flight of stone steps leading downward. These they descended in darkness, having closed the door tightly behind them, and at a depth of perhaps twenty feet they came to a second door. This, which they were also careful to close, let them into a passage several yards wide, faintly lighted at intervals by tiny slits high overhead. They had now barred out all sound from the Court of the Shrine, and with a feeling of relief that was intensely welcome after the recent strain, they pushed aimlessly ahead through the underground solitude and silence.

"We are in luck, and no mistake!" Nigel said, finally. "Jove, what a pinch we had of it! It was your quick wit that pulled us through, Hawksmoor. They will have some lively times up above before Mr. Leopard is safely tucked away in his cage again. And I would give a good bit to see the faces of Pershad Singh and that old scoundrel Vashtu when they find that we are not in the net! What do you suppose they will do?"

"They'll probably hit on the truth," Hawksmoor replied, grimly, "and be following us up in the course of an hour or so."

"Heaven forbid!" muttered Nigel. "But don't you think it more likely that they will conclude we changed our minds about entering the monastery—at least, on the first day of the offerings—and are still hiding among the mountains?"

"No. I don't, Davenant. I believe they will be shrewd enough to suspect that we released the leopard, and our motive for doing so; and that will mean, sooner or later, a search in this underground part of the monastery. But we'll hope for the best; I don't by any means despair of pulling through all right."

"And of rescuing Muriel?" Nigel asked eagerly. "It is maddening to think how close she may be to us at this moment."

"It is extremely unlikely that Miss Brabazon's place of confinement is anywhere in this quarter," Hawksmoor interrupted, "and at present I am not thinking of her rescue. The underground passage that Bhagwan Das told me about is separated from the river by a parapet, and if we can find the place we will not only be reasonably secure from discovery, but there is every reason to expect that Bhagwan Das will find means of joining us there to-night."

"By Jove, that's so!" exclaimed Nigel. "And he will be able to tell us where to find Muriel!"

"Very likely."

"I hope we don't miss the spot, then; happily there is plenty of time before evening. By the way, what do you think will be Ali Mirza's fate?"

"Something connected with boiling oil or molten lead, or worse things—ultimately. But for the present his life is safe enough; they will keep him for purposes of identification in the event of our capture."

"I'm sorry for the poor devil," said Nigel.

"Yes, I daresay they tortured him till he had to confess," assented Hawksmoor. "This way, Davenant. We'll bear to the right."

It is needless to tell at length how the fugitives fared during the rest of that ill-begun day. Let it suffice to say that disappointment and failure steadily dogged

their footsteps, wore away their patience and spirits. For though they had started on the proper course, they stood not one chance in a thousand of finding the goal they sought without the experienced Bhagwan Das to guide them through the labyrinthine maze that underlay the monastery. A wonderful place it was! Centuries of toil must have been required to complete this herculean task—to turn the rugged mountain gorge into so mighty and extensive a stronghold! And what they saw of it was only the subterranean part, the portion beneath the great stone floor on which the monastery proper was built.

Hour after hour they wandered through the network of passages and galleries, treading weather-worn flagstones that might have been laid a thousand years before, with strangely-carved walls of masonry to right and left of them. The corridors were awe-inspiring and depressing; there seemed to be no end to them, and they forked in all directions with bewildering multiplicity. High overhead twinkled the tiny slits, now close together, now far apart, letting in a dim light and a supply of sweet and cooling air.

But they found no outlet to the world above, nor could they stumble upon the subterranean river. It was at a lower depth, they knew, and the aggravating part of it was that they were frequently near it. Sometimes they heard the sullen flow and gurgle of water beneath their feet, sometimes to right of them, to left, or faintly in the rear—by which signs they judged that they had described more than one circle in their aimless travels, and might even be back in the vicinity of the Court of the Shrine. It was some comfort that they heard nothing to indicate that their foes were searching for them, and in time Hawksmoor acquiesced in Nigel's opinion that Pershad Singh believed the fugitives to be still lurking in the mountains bordering the Lake of Dacca.

At last, exhausted by hours of futile wandering, the weary men felt the hope that had sustained them sinking low, felt their courage ebbing away. They pressed on gloomily and slowly, for the light was fading from the apertures overhead, and they could see but indistinctly.

"The day is over and darkness is coming on," said Hawksmoor. "As likely as not Bhagwan Das is waiting for us somewhere in this infernal place, but there is no hope of finding the passage by the river. I don't know what we are going to do, Davenant. We are utterly lost—can't find our way anywhere. And we can't go much longer without food and drink."

"And sleep," added Nigel. "I'm drowsy, hungry and thirsty. Yes, it's a bad scrape. We're not even near the river now, for I don't hear the flow of the current. What beastly luck we've had, Hawksmoor! This place is a regular death trap; we might wander for weeks and never find the way out of it."

"It may have been made for that very purpose," Hawksmoor replied, "and I half believe it was. Things are pretty bad when I can't see light through them, and I'll confess, Davenant, that we stand more than a fair chance of starving to death in this black hole."

"It's a nice prospect," Nigel said, bitterly. "In years to come, perhaps, some reckless fool like our selves will find our whitened bones here. I'd rather throw myself on the mercy of the priests—"

He was interrupted by a cry from Hawksmoor, who had just led the way to the left:

"Look, look—a light!"

Yes, it was a light—a silvery beam, only a few yards ahead, shining obliquely down into the gloomy passage, and revealing a row of green and mossy steps. It was not what they sought—the river would have been a more welcome find—but this promised at least a better fate than starvation to the well-nigh despairing men.

They hurried to the spot, looked at the square patch of misty blue sky that was visible overhead, and then, hearing not the slightest sound, they cautiously climbed up the steps. After poking their heads out first, they emerged fearlessly above ground.

It was a beautiful scene that met their eyes. They were in the middle of a long, wide garden, evidently made hundreds of years before on the artificial covering of the valley. Shrubs and trees grew in profusion, as high and as dense as in their native wilds, and flowers of every hue filled the air with perfume. Here and there fountains threw silvery jets above the foliage, and walks paved with white marble led this way and that.

The sunset glow was just fading from the sky, giving

place to twilight and the shadows of night. There was no sign of human presence—none of bird or beast. Along the length of the valley the gardens extended further than the eye could reach in both directions. On the left they were bounded by the outer wall of the monastery, steeply overhung by the mountain range in which was the tunnel. On the right stretched a lower wall of the same glistening red stone, evidently a part of the monastery itself. It was battlemented and buttressed with an occasional narrow slit of a window, and over the top of this also a mountain barrier thrust its hoary white peaks high into the dimming sky?

"Well, what are we going to do next?" asked Nigel, when they had silently looked at their surroundings for several minutes.

"We won't go back into the cavern—that's certain," replied Hawksmoor. "We must give up the idea of getting help from Bhagwan Das, and depend on our own wits. Suppose we explore the gardens. I think it will be quite safe if we are careful, and we may pick up some valuable information."

Nigel readily agreed to the proposition, and under cover of the sheltering twilight they made their way through the trees and shrubbery, avoiding the paved walks, and stopping now and then to listen. So they advanced for a quarter of a mile, and then Hawksmoor suddenly laid an eager hand on his companion's arm.

"Look!" he whispered. "There, through the leaves! Good heavens, don't you see?"

CHAPTER XXVII.

A SWIM IN THE DARK.

Nigel's face flushed under its dark stain as he gazed for a few seconds in the direction indicated, by his companion.

"I see!" he gasped, excitedly. "Can it really be her? Yes, it is Muriel Brabazon!"

"Of course it is—I recognize her features," replied Hawksmoor. "Be careful! Don't try to get any nearer!"

Both stood in silence for a few moments, staring through the parted foliage. Very close to the right lay the wall of the monastery, and at a height of thirty feet from the ground, jutting out from an arched doorway hung with curtains, was a small balcony of polished red stone, and leaning against the carved parapet was the graceful figure of a woman that could be none other than Matadeen Mir's captive.

Yes, it was Muriel Brabazon. The moon had risen even while the twilight lingered, and the silvery beams shone on the girl's lovely face—a face that had lost much of its rich coloring. Her chestnut hair drooped on her forehead and neck, and she wore a creamy gown of native silk, embroidered with jewels, and confined at her waist by a golden girdle. She was looking sadly and wistfully across the gardens, doubtless thinking of the distant friends whom she might never see again, and something in her expression, in her very attitude, suggested defiance—told that she was as far as ever from yielding to the demands of her captors.

"Muriel, my darling!" slipped half unconsciously, half aloud, from Nigel's lips. "So near, and yet so hopelessly out of reach!" he added. "It is maddening; I must do something!"

"What would you do?" Hawksmoor asked, coldly.

"Give her a sign," Nigel answered. "Let her know that we are here. It will put courage and hope into her heart—warn her to be ready to escape if the chance comes. And I am sure I can manage it without discovery. The room behind the balcony is likely empty, and I see no one up on the battlements."

"How do you propose to do it, Davenant?"

Nigel hurriedly explained the plan that had flashed into his mind, and, to his delight, his companion approved of it.

"Gain the girl's attention, if you can," said Hawksmoor. "and then ask her if she can't manage to get into the gardens to-night. Perhaps she can fashion some sort of a rope and lower herself from the balcony. The situation is desperate, Davenant, and this is the only chance we are likely to have, since Bhagwan Das has failed us."

"It doesn't promise much, Hawksmoor; for even if Muriel succeeds in joining us—"

"Then we will make another attempt to find the subterranean river and a boat. Or perhaps we will be able to scale the outer wall of the monastery."

"I don't believe we can do, either," replied Nigel; "but, as you say, we are not likely to get another opportunity to rescue the girl."

"I'm sure we won't," Hawksmoor declared. "Come, there is no time to lose."

They hastily crept through the trees and bushes until they were about twenty feet from the base of the wall, and here they halted in a sheltering thicket. The balcony was close overhead now, and Muriel was still there alone, still gazing over the parapet at the great black bulk of the mountain.

"Don't take her too much by surprise," said Hawksmoor. "How will she stand it?"

"She has plenty of nerve—she won't betray herself," Nigel whispered; and with that he began to sing, in a low, quivering voice:

"By the old Moulméin Pagoda, looking eastward to the sea,
There's a Burnah girl a-sitting, and—"

Muriel started ever so little, and her slim form straightened. She looked furtively down from the balcony, darted a quick glance over her shoulder, then, carelessly, her sweet voice took up the familiar words:

"For the wind is in the palm trees, and the temple bells they say,
"Come you back, you British soldier—come you back to Mandalay!"

There was a brief instant of silence. So far all was well. The girl understood, and was on her guard. Nigel rose a little and waved a hand above the thicket. "Muriel, have courage!" he called in a whisper. "Friends are near. Is it safe to speak?"

"Mr. Davenant!" the girl murmured distinctly. "Oh, thank God! Heaven surely sent you! But how can you rescue me from this dreadful place? I am closely guarded, and I fear it is impossible—"

She stopped abruptly, made a warning gesture, and turned round with a look of fright. And instantly, before the men below could realize that danger threatened, a fierce-looking native woman darted from the arched doorway. With a shrill cry she seized Muriel and dragged her by main force from the balcony into the room. Again and again the shrill voice rang out, bringing immediate responses from different directions; and the deep, savage baying of a hound, evidently close by in the garden, gave the Englishmen warning of a worse peril.

"Run—run for your life!" exclaimed Hawksmoor. "It's all up with our plan!"

"But Muriel?" cried Nigel. "My God, can we do nothing to save her?"

"Nothing, Davenant! You are mad to dream of it! It's doubtful if we can save ourselves, but we'll have a try for it. That Jezebel must have been listening within the apartment; she'll set all the priests in the monastery at our heels. Run for your life—quick! Don't you hear?"

Still Nigel hesitated, but a frantic jerk from Hawksmoor roused him to a keener sense of his peril. He shot a brief glance up at the balcony from which the woman whom he loved better than life had just vanished—yes, he knew now that his heart was lost to Muriel Brabazon! Then, maddened with disappointment and grief, burning with rage, he turned and dashed after his companion.

Like frightened deer they sped through thickets and trees, leaping the marble paths, and heading in the direction of the subterranean passage, which was the safest place they could think of. And as they ran they heard the gruff baying of the pursuing hound, ringing loudly above the more distant uproar within the monastery.

"How are we going to get rid of the brute?" panted Nigel.

"We must fight him. Leave him to me!" replied Hawksmoor, stopping short and drawing his knife. Almost as he spoke, as he faced about, the hound came leaping out of the shrubbery within ten feet of him—a monstrous Tibetan mastiff, with flashing eyes, lolling red tongue, and two formidable rows of white teeth—evidently a savage creature and one dreaded by the priests themselves, for he wore a sort of a muzzle of gold wire.

Hawksmoor was quick to note that fact, and he shrank the less from the task he had set himself. He withstood the assault unflinchingly, clutching at the mastiff's throat with one hand, while with the other he

tried to drive the knife home. But the brute's weight and impetus upset him, and both rolled from the path into a copse of tall spear grass, Hawksmoor keeping his grip on the hound, and the latter snarling and snapping like a fiend.

The two vanished behind the grass, and Nigel, his weapon ready for use, sprang forward with intent to aid his companion. But he was barely within the copse, when he heard a hoarse cry from Hawksmoor, followed after a second or two of silence by a loud and distant splash. It was too late to check himself. Three steps more and a round black hole, fringed with reeds and stonework, yawned before him. He tottered on the brink, vainly trying to keep his balance, and then plunged head foremost into space with an agonized cry on his lips.

The fall could not have been less than thirty feet, but fortunately the water at the bottom was very deep. Nigel went far under, pluckily held his breath, and rose half-suffocated, to the top. Filling his lungs with air, he looked above and around him. A strong current had already carried him some distance from the circular hole through which he had dropped, and was sweeping him steadily into the black and chilling darkness. He realized at once that he had fallen into the subterranean river, and his next thought was of his companion. He anxiously called him by name—once, twice.

"Here I am, Davenant!" rang Hawksmoor's familiar and welcome voice. "Are you all right?"

"Yes, sound as ever," Nigel answered; and as he spoke, he dimly made out a head close to one side of him. "Where is the mastiff?" he added.

"Drowned, I hope," was the reply. "We parted company when we struck, and I've not seen or heard the brute since. Did you follow me on purpose?"

"No; but I'm glad I'm with you," said Nigel. "I pitched into the hole almost before I could see it. I suppose this is the river we were looking for?"

"No doubt of that. It's some consolation to know where we are. Can you stand a long swim, Davenant?"

"Yes, I'm fit for it," replied Nigel. "But why not make for one shore or the other? The stream can't be wide."

"I'm afraid we won't better ourselves by landing," Hawksmoor answered, "for after what has happened we can't accomplish anything by remaining in the monastery. It won't take the priests long to find out what became of us, and then they will be looking for us down here with boats. However, we'll make sure if we can land, should there be any need of it."

So they struck out side by side across the current—they had drifted into utter darkness by this time—and a score of strokes brought them to the bank on the right. But it rose sheer out of the water higher than they could reach, presenting a smooth and slimy surface.

"It's no use—we could never climb out here," said Hawksmoor; "I daresay both banks are like this all the way along. I see only one thing for us to do, Davenant. We must follow the river down to where it passes from under the monastery into the lake. I believe there are gates and a landing there, and we shall likely pick up a boat."

"But that means leaving Muriel to her fate, and throwing up all our plans," demurred Nigel.

"True," assented Hawksmoor; "but what else can we do? I should be the last to abandon the girl as long as there was a chance of saving her, but it would be sheer madness to think of rescuing her under these circumstances. When we have reached the lake, and are hidden safely on some island, we will consider the matter carefully. At present we must look after our own interests, and that will keep our hands full."

"I suppose you are right," Nigel said, gloomily. "Indeed, I know you are. But it's hard lines to abandon Muriel to those devils, and to leave the monastery after the trouble we had getting in. God help the poor girl! You'll try to save her yet, Hawksmoor, won't you?"

"I will, Davenant. You ought to know that without asking. Come, let us get a little further out from the bank, where the current is swifter."

They struck a few yards towards mid-stream. Hawksmoor leading the way, and then swam slowly down with the tide, their heads close together. They were lightly clad, both good swimmers, and they felt confident of holding out for at least an hour.

For a time they drifted on silently through the

pitchy darkness of the subterranean channel, feeling more and more the chilling effect of the icy waters. There was not a sound to be heard in the hollow vault—only the low murmur of the stream. Presently, having swung around a slight and almost imperceptible curve they saw in the far distance a patch of silvery white light glimmering athwart the blackness.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE ESCAPE TO THE LAKE.

"Look!" said Nigel: "that must be the outlet to the Lake of Dacca. We shall soon be there."

"About half a mile yet, I should judge," replied Hawksmoor. "Are you equal to it?"

"Yes, if that's all the distance. I'm only beginning to feel a little tired. But suppose we can't find a boat?"

"That's a contingency I'm not prepared to grapple with, Davenant. From what Bhagwan Das told me, boats are kept at the mouth of the river, so I rather think we may pick one up. Ugh, how cold the water is!"

"It's like ice!" Nigel muttered.

"It doesn't look as though the priests were on our track," said Hawksmoor. "Possibly, having discovered that we fell through the hole, they believe that we are both drowned."

"They may be searching the gardens," suggested Nigel, "or the underground passages where we wandered all afternoon. By Jove, I wonder if Bhagwan Das should be somewhere about here hunting for us!"

"It's quite likely," assented Hawksmoor.

He twice called the Hindoo by name, but there was no response—only the weird, shuddering echoes of his own voice, rolling far through the cavern.

"I don't suppose Bhagwan Das could give his fellow-priests the slip," he said. "It was a risky thing to sing out as I did. Listen: the echo hasn't quite stopped! If any guards are posted yonder at the outlet, they will be on the watch for us."

With anxious hearts they swam on for a moment or two, but the silence that followed the echoes remained unbroken.

"I wonder if there are any crocodiles in the river," Nigel said, abruptly, "or any of those great serpents?"

"It's not likely," Hawksmoor replied, uneasily, "for if any of either species were about, we should hardly be alive and swimming now."

But the suggestion was alarming to both men, and they could not rid their minds of the horrible thought. They yielded to terror and panic, and spurted hard to reach the gates, momentarily expecting to be seized and jerked under by hungry crocodiles, or to hear the splashing of one of the monstrous serpents as it rose beside them. The strain and the chilling water soon told on them; their limbs grew weak and numb, as they panted for breath.

Fortunately they were close to the goal now. Had the distance been twenty yards further they must have succumbed and gone under. They swam on pluckily, struggling to keep their heads above water. A pale light shone all around them now, revealing on each side a sheer wall of rock rising without a break. Though the river's channel had narrowed considerably, the current was almost imperceptible—a fact that indicated a vast increase in depth.

With a few more strokes the exhausted men, on the point of sinking, reached the gates and caught hold of the bars. There they clung for a moment, numb with cold and weakness, and while they rested after their hard fight they looked eagerly about them.

The outlet from the subterranean river to the lake was about sixty feet square, and from wall to wall stretched what at first seemed to be an insuperable barrier—a gate of massive ironwork, rising fully twenty feet. Overhead the artificial floor of the valley, jutting out a little further before it terminated, and beyond the gate, stretching away between two receding mountains thousands of feet high, the purple Lake of Dacca gleamed like burnished silver as far as the eye could reach.

It was a glorious night, and the lustrous beams of the moon shone on objects near as well as distant. On

the right, just outside of the gate, the mountain rose straight from the water; but at the base of the wall on the left was a narrow shelf two feet above the surface of the river, and on this shelf lay a long and narrow boat with two paddles beside it. Hawksmoor was the first to make the welcome discovery.

"Look!" he said. "That means life and safety to us."

"But how are we going to get to it?" asked Nigel. "We can't crawl through the bars; they are too close together."

"Quite true," assented Hawksmoor. "There is only one chance, and I'm going to try it now. If I succeed you must follow me."

With that he let go of the bars and swam back a dozen feet. Then he turned about, waved one hand, and dived suddenly. Nigel, divining his companion's purpose, watched with breathless anxiety. A few seconds later Hawksmoor came up, and on the outer side of the gate. He swam to the shelf and climbed upon it.

"Your turn, Davenant," he called, in a whisper. "Go down about ten feet, and you'll clear the bars."

It was a difficult task for Nigel, weak and numbed as he still was, but he did not hesitate an instant. He paddled up stream, turned, and dived. He felt the bars grate his back as he swam under water, and just when he could hold his breath no longer, his head shot to the surface. He struggled feebly to the shelf, where Hawksmoor caught him and pulled him out.

They rested for a couple of minutes, and then noiselessly lowered the boat to the water. It was in bad repair and very dry, evidently having been out of use for a long time. With great care they climbed into the shaky craft, pushed off from the rocks, and drifted sluggishly away on the current.

"Now to find a safe hiding place," said Hawksmoor. "We have been more fortunate than I expected. I was afraid the gate would be guarded. As yet the priests are not searching for us on the river, so we are sure of a good start."

"How far will we go?" asked Nigel.

"Perhaps three or four miles," Hawksmoor replied, "and then we will look for shelter on the mainland. Come, Davenant, we'll warm ourselves by hard work."

Fast and steadily they dipped the paddles, driving the light boat further and further from the yawning mouth of the subterranean river, on and on between the diverging mountain walls, until they were well out in the open moonlit lake, where even by night water and air wore a purple hue.

When they had gone about a mile they stopped and looked back. The moon was shining into the gorge between the lofty mountains, shedding a silvery glow on the iron gate and on the wall of red granite above it that marked the limit of the monastery. A lump rose in Nigel's throat. He was leaving the girl he loved passionately behind him—leaving her to the mercies of the cruel priests and of Matadeen Mir. The thought was agony to him—the keenest torture.

"Come, Davenant, you are not paddling," said Hawksmoor. "We must put a few more miles between us and the monastery."

"And what then?" Nigel asked, hoarsely. "You remember your promise?"

"Yes; we will make another attempt to rescue Muriel Brabazon if a chance offers."

"And suppose one doesn't offer?"

"Then the only thing for us to do is to try to reach Katmandu, and report to the British Resident—"

Hawksmoor broke off suddenly, and glanced down at his feet.

"Good heavens, the boat is leaking!" he cried. "Our weight is forcing the cracks apart!"

He was right. The leakage had only just begun, but already the water was several inches deep in the bottom, and was oozing rapidly in from several places. The rickety old craft seemed to be coming apart.

"It's all up with us!" exclaimed Nigel. "We can't take to swimming, for the big serpents or the crocodiles would soon finish us."

"Yonder is an island!" cried Hawksmoor, pointing to a dark mass of rocks and bushes about a quarter of a mile ahead. "We must try to reach it before the boat sinks! Paddle for your life, quick!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A YOUNG BREADWINNER;

OR,

GUY HAMMERSLEY'S TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS.

The Story of a Brave Boy's Struggle for Fame in the Great Metropolis.

By MATTHEW WHITE, JR.

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("A YOUNG BREADWINNER" was commenced last week.)

CHAPTER IV.

CALLED TO ACCOUNT.

For an instant or two, while Mr. Fox was speaking, Guy tried to imagine that he was not himself living through this bitter experience, but was reading of it in a book. How could he bear it? He, a Hammersley, a name that, as far back as records went, had never been sullied by the least taint of disgrace!

And his mother! How could he tell her of this dreadful charge?

"Well, sir, are you ready to accompany me down to Mr. Inwood's? Of course, if you can prove to his satisfaction that you did not take the money, well and good."

Mr. Fox's voice broke in on Guy's meditations, as that gentleman rose and buttoned his coat.

"Yes, sir, in one minute;" and Guy stepped back to the dining-room to ask Eliza to tell his mother that he had gone down-town again. He did not dare trust himself to see her. Then he went out with Mr. Fox.

The fresh air seemed to inspire him with hope, in some way.

"It can't be possible," he told himself, "that in these days of law and justice an innocent person can be sent to jail. Mr. Inwood must see that I didn't take the money."

They went directly to the office of the Fireside Favorite, Mr. Fox taking a paper out of his pocket and not speaking one word during the journey.

And with what different sensations Guy ascended those three flights of dirty stairs from the feelings that had dominated him in the same locality but two short hours ago!

Mr. Fox threw open the door labeled, "Office of the Fireside Favorite," and poor Guy felt the hot blood rush in surges to his cheeks as he found the room deserted when he was there on that ill-fated errand, now filled with girls, who one and all ceased their work as he entered, and stared at him with cruel, relentless steadiness.

But the stare was not the only thing he had to face. A regular buzz of "Here he is," went round, and he even heard a skurrying of skirts as girls not so favorably placed for seeing hurried forward to get a sight of the messenger from Fox & Burdell's who had stolen thirteen dollars.

One remark he heard distinctly:

"Oh, Hattie, isn't he handsome!" one pale-faced worker on wrapping whispered to her seat mate.

Mr. Fox glanced neither to the right nor the left, but marched straight ahead to Mr. Inwood's private office. He took pains, too, that Guy should walk ahead of him.

Mr. Inwood saw them the instant they entered the outer room and twirled round in his revolving chair, threw his head back and folded his arms, and thus awaited their arrival with the air of a supreme court

judge. He was a very stout man, with an immense double chin, but, contrary to the rule that is supposed to hold good with most fat people, he did not look in the least jolly, or as if he ever could be so.

Before Guy and his conductor reached his apartment, which was cut off from the main store by a glass partition, a little man, very thin, and with an immense amount of jewelry about his person, stepped out of the adjoining room, ranged himself alongside of Mr. Inwood and put a pair of eyeglasses astride of his nose.

"That's Mr. Tretbar, I suppose, the head of the establishment," Guy reflected, the hopes that had served in a measure to brighten his trip down town deserting him as he noted the sinister looks of the two men in whose hands his fate rested.

"Ah, good afternoon, Mr. Fox," exclaimed the little man, coming forward to shake hands very effusively. "I'm very glad to see you, er—I mean sorry that it should be brought about by such an inauspicious occasion. Take a seat, take a seat. So this is the young man. Um!"

Mr. Tretbar drew out the last exclamation to a lengthy guttural murmur, as if Guy had possessed the features and general appearance of a hardened criminal.

He did not request him to take a seat, but as soon as he had entered walked over to the door and, closed it, then stood with his back against it as though to nip in the bud any attempt at escape.

"Yes, this is the young man," responded Mr. Fox, sinking into the seat and wiping out the inside band of his hat with his handkerchief; "and I regret to report that he utterly refuses to acknowledge the crime and restore the stolen property."

Guy could not stand by silent and listen to this. He took one step forward, and with his well-shaped head thrown back so that he looked his accusers full in the face, he said:

"Gentlemen, if I had taken that money, I dare say I should have been only too willing to have accepted the offer Mr. Fox made me. But I cannot perjure myself by confessing to a crime of which I am not guilty. Besides, I could not afford to expend thirteen dollars for such a purpose, even could I stoop to do such a thing. On the other hand, if I had taken the money, would I have been so short-sighted as to have stayed where hands could easily be laid upon me?"

"You did not return to the restaurant," Mr. Fox here interposed; "and when I saw you at the house you had your overcoat on, so I imagine I got there just in time."

"I explained to you, Mr. Fox," Guy retorted, his face flushing at the unjust imputation, "why it was I did not at once report to you, and the reason I happened to have my overcoat on was because, hoping to get back to the restaurant very soon, I had not taken it off."

All this time Mr. Inwood had not spoken a word. Now, when there was a pause for an instant, he wheeled around in his chair so as to face Guy.

"You have had your say, sir," he began, "now permit me to have mine. You have proved, to your own satisfaction, that you did not take the money. Now, then, will you be good enough to prove to mine who did?"

"Some one who knows your habits much better than I do, sir," replied Guy, trying to speak, poor fellow, as respectfully as he could.

"Ah, that's manly, that's courageous, is it not?" here interrupted Mr. Tretbar. "To lay the blame on one of those poor girls outside who labor here from morning till night to support mothers and little sisters at home! Shame on you, young man, to seek to shelter your own crime behind a woman's skirts."

As Mr. Tretbar uttered the last sentence, he gesticulated freely and ended by laying the flat of his hand against his breast, while he shook his head mournfully from side to side.

"Come, now, young man, doesn't that move you?" put in Mr. Inwood, as though the heart that could not be touched by his employer's eloquent plea for the working girl must be a flint indeed.

"I did not take the money," replied Guy, firmly.

"Well, Mr. Fox, I do not see how we can compromise matters while the young man remains in this frame of mind," began Mr. Inwood. Then turning to Guy, he added: "Will you step into the next room for a moment?"

He indicated the door on the right, leading into Mr. Tretbar's private office, and at the same time stepped to the door of his own apartment and called out "Hat-tie!"

The girl came forward and Mr. Inwood then directed her to wait in Mr. Tretbar's room.

Guy's ears tingled. He understood only too well that she had been summoned to watch him.

He walked over to the window, and leaning his burning forehead against the pane, looked down into the bustling street below. How different it all appeared to him now! Everything seemed covered, men, horses, trucks, with a sort of haze.

It is always so. When we are in deep trouble the ordinary sights of every day life assume an entirely different aspect, and at times we even find ourselves taking note of trivial circumstances that, as a rule, would quite escape our observation.

So now Guy noted how a horse, standing in front of a crockery store on the opposite side of the street, lowered his head and twisted it round in the attempt to see after a little yellow dog that had come trotting along the sidewalk past him.

The next minute the recollection of his trouble swept back over the boy in a great wave and "What will mother say? It will almost kill her," was the refrain that kept repeating itself over and over in his brain till the moving throng in the thoroughfare below seemed to be whirling round like the figures in a zoetrope.

Guy was growing giddy himself and clutched the window frame for support.

Just then came the call: "Hammersley, you may return now."

CHAPTER V.

IN THE SHOE STORE.

When Guy re-entered Mr. Inwood's room, he found Mr. Fox and Mr. Tretbar with their chairs drawn up close to that of the advertising manager. Evidently their heads had been together in most serious discussion.

"Young man," began Mr. Inwood, "we have come to a decision, and one, I am bound to say, which your obstinacy does not in the least merit. It is this: in consideration of your mother's feelings and those of Mr. Burdell, I will not press the charge. Mr. Fox will replace the thirteen dollars and dismiss you from his employ. The case will not be brought into the courts, and we will do our best to keep it out of the newspapers. As I said before, you do not deserve this clemency, and if you have a spark of gratitude in your heart, it ought to send you down upon your knees before Mr. Fox to thank him for his consideration."

Gratitude! The word seemed a mockery to Guy, used in this connection. He was to be sent off, unexculpated,

branded, with the suspicion of having committed a theft, and was expected to be grateful!

He could not speak, he felt a choking sensation in his throat, while not the color of shame, but the pallor of hopelessness overspread his face. He made a desperate effort and then forced out the words: "I did not take the money. What more can I say?"

"Say no more, but go," blazed forth Mr. Fox, and Guy lost no time in taking advantage of the permission.

Without another look at the three hard faces of his judges, he turned and walked rapidly out toward the stairway, past the two rows of staring girls, who, he could feel without looking, all stopped their work to gaze after him.

But when he reached the sidewalk, "What is the use of hurrying?" was the question that confronted him. "No work to do, and I cannot go home before the usual time. I must not let mother know about this today. She has already had too much strain on her nerves."

The hands on the big dial in front of a clock store pointed to half-past two. It will be remembered that Guy had had no lunch, and now that the suspense about his fate was over, and he knew the worst, he felt as weak as a rag. But the very idea of entering a restaurant was repugnant to him.

When he reached the corner he turned up a street that would take him away from Fox & Burdell's, and presently passing a fruit stand, stopped and bought an apple. The stand was next to a vacant store, and as he stood leaning against the barred shutters, eating his decidedly frugal midday meal, his gaze chanced to fall on the window of a shoe store opposite, wherein hung a card bearing the words:

"Boy Wanted."

"If I could only get another position at once," was the thought that flashed into Guy's mind at the sight, "another need never know!"

He hastily finished his apple, and then pulling himself together so as not to betray any trace of the ordeal through which he had just passed, crossed the street.

"Traubmann & Feder" was the name over the door, and at the moment trade appeared to be dull, for a shock-headed German, looking as if he might be Mr. Traubmann or Mr. Feder, stood in the doorway looking out, twiddling a toothpick between his teeth, while another Teutonic visaged gentleman, evidently the other partner in the firm, was seated on the outermost of a row of chairs, reading the advertisements in a morning paper.

The store was a medium sized one, and Guy judged must cater principally to the wants of men employed in the butter and cheese houses in the vicinity.

The instant he entered the establishment both men started towards him with smiling "Good afternoon," evidently under the impression that he was an intending purchaser.

"I came in response to that card in the window," began Guy, addressing himself to the man with the paper.

"Ach, yes," and there was a tinge of disappointment in the exclamation. "Well, have you had any experience in shoes?"

"No," Guy was forced to admit, "but you don't expect me to make them, do you?"

"No, no; we want a poy to wait on customers and keep things neat around the shop. We do now so pig a pizness that Mr. Feder and me can't do it all alone mit ourselves, and the books, too. I been a lookin' through de paper to see if anybody put a notice in for shoe stores, but I didn't see any, so I shust hung out that card."

"I think I could please you," said Guy, eagerly.

"The shoes have the number and prices marked on the box, don't they?"

"Yes, yes, that part's easy. It's the sellin' we're particular about: the talkin' smooth an' polite to de ladies what come in here. Now I tink you could do dat, by lookin' at you."

The German laughed and Guy blushed.

"How much do you pay?" he asked.

"Dree dollars a week; hours from seven to seven and Saturday nights to nine."

Guy almost gasped. The pay was small enough, but when he compared the hours with those he had been accustomed to at the restaurant it seemed as though he would be actually throwing himself away at the price.

But would it be wise in him to let this opportunity of securing a position slip by? He could try it at any rate, and if he didn't like it, could leave at the end of the week. Then, when he tried for another place, he could say that he had discharged himself.

Thus Guy reasoned rapidly, and then replied:

"I'll try it. I'm not used to such early hours, but if you'll let me begin right now, I'll do my best."

"Very good. Come back with me to the desk and give me your name and where you live, and somebody's what can speak for your being honest and all that."

Guy complied, mentioned Dr. Pendleton for a reference, and then took off his coat, ready to get to work.

The other man came back and was introduced as Mr. Feder. The partners then retired to the little boxed-in compartment where the books were kept, while Guy was sent forward to make himself familiar with the contents of the various shelves.

"They seem to put a good deal of faith in me," he mused. "I rather think though that Mr. Traubmann, from the way he looked at me, imagined he has made a very good bargain. I suppose the boy he had in mind was a smaller chap of fourteen or fifteen. Wonder how I'm going to get my breakfast by half-past six, though? It would hardly pay me to get it at some restaurant downtown. Perhaps I can make some arrangement with Miss Stanwix, though."

He resolutely tried to banish from his mind all thoughts of the Fireside Favorite, and to this end bestirred himself to learn as much as possible about his new duties. He took down box after box, examined the shoes inside, as well as the statements of size and prices on the lid, and then made a mental note of the locality in the store in which certain styles were kept.

He had been thus occupied for about twenty minutes, the quiet of the place being broken only by the thundering past now and then of a train on the Elevated Road, and the subdued murmur of the voices of the partners, as they went over the books together, when a lady entered. She was short and dumpy, had light hair, considerably frizzed up over her forehead, and wore a bonnet in which the combination of colors was enough to drive an artist distracted.

Guy quickly pushed back into place the box of Congress gaiters he had been in the act of removing, and walking up to her, said in his politest manner: "Good afternoon, madam. With what can I serve you?"

She started back, gave Guy a look that seemed to wither all the spirit within him, and then, pushing on past him, exclaimed: "What impudence is this? Can't one wife come to see her man without being asked what she wants?"

With that she sailed on majestically to the rear of the store where Guy soon heard her demanding of Mr. Traubmann if the new clerk didn't know a lady from a woman who came to buy shoes.

However, the husband did not think it worth while to reprove his recently acquired employee for not recognizing Mrs. Traubmann, who presently departed, stuffing a roll of money into her card case. She had scarcely been gone a quarter of an hour, before the sky clouded over and presently the rain began to fall in sheets.

Guy was sent to take in the shoes that hung out in front for exhibition purposes, and while he was thus engaged a man hurried by him and entered the store. Guy followed to wait upon him and then saw that it was Mr. Inwood.

CHAPTER VI.

A DRIFT AGAIN.

"Just get me out a pair of rubbers as quick as you can. I've only got ten minutes to catch my boat, and I've had so much trouble with my throat lately, I don't dare—"

Mr. Inwood had got that far before he looked up and saw Guy standing before him.

"Great George, is it you?" he exclaimed, so loudly that the attention of Mr. Traubmann was attracted to the spot.

He came hurrying forward, and then, "Ach, Mr. Inwood," he cried, "how do you do, sir?"

"Quick, Traubmann," responded the other, "get me a pair of rubbers. You know my size."

Guy retired precipitately to the other side of the store.

"What a perversity of fate," he reflected, "that that

man of all others should happen in here to-day! And yet, I suppose he lives over in Jersey, and is on his way to the ferry, and so passes this shoe store every day in going to and from his office. I dare say it's all up with me here now. I might as well go get my hat and coat at once."

For during the process of trying on the rubbers Mr. Inwood kept up a steady but subdued murmur of talk, and when he rose to go Mr. Traubmann called after him: "Verra much obliged to you, sir, for letting me know."

Guy braced himself for the ordeal, which was not long delayed.

"I think you will not suit us, Mr. Hammersley."

Mr. Traubmann came straight up to him after bowing Mr. Inwood out, and delivered himself of the above brief sentence.

"Very well, sir," was Guy's quiet response, and he started to go to the rear of the store, where he had hung his things. He paused for an instant, however, to say earnestly:

"Mr. Traubmann, I know very well what is the cause of this. I do not ask you to keep me, but before I go I want to say that I did not take that money."

That was all, and three minutes later Guy was out in the storm, without an umbrella, and with a weight of misery upon his heart that it seemed to him then could never be lifted off.

"Branded as a thief!" was the refrain that kept repeating itself in his ears.

Mechanically he hurried across the street to the Elevated Road Station and boarded an uptown train. It was now about the time he had been in the habit of returning from the restaurant. His mother need not know about the state of affairs for to-night at least. Perhaps in the morning he could get something better.

Dr. Pendleton could help him—unless Mr. Burdell should report to him that unfortunate day's occurrence. What a nightmare that was! Whichever way he turned he found himself confronted by something or other in connection therewith.

When he reached home he was drenched through, but "My outward state is only in keeping with my inward one," he reflected, with a sort of dismal sense of satisfaction at the fitness of things.

"Guy," called his mother, as he stepped past her door to enter his own room first.

"Yes, mother; I'm wet, and must change my clothes at once."

He hurried through the process, wondering as he paused for an instant to decide which suit to put on, how long it would be before he should be saved the necessity of making a choice by reason of having only one, or at the most two suits left. Then, bracing himself to try and seem as cheerful as ordinarily, he entered his mother's room.

"My poor, poor boy!"

Mrs. Hammersley had clasped her arms about his neck, and was sobbing on his shoulder.

"Why, mother, what is it?" he asked, leading her to the sofa. "Have you felt any ill effects from your accident?"

"Oh, no, no," she returned, trying to steady her voice. "It is you, my boy—to think they should accuse you of such dreadful things."

Guy felt a sudden sinking of the heart. His mother, then, knew all. But how had she learned it? Was it possible that Mr. Fox could have sent her word?

"But tell me that you cleared yourself, my son, and that they begged your pardon for daring to breathe the least suspicion against your integrity. Sit down here by me and tell me all about it. All I know is what I got out of Eliza by closely questioning her as to what she overheard when she was setting the table for lunch."

Poor Guy! He thought he had already experienced the sharpest poignancy of his misfortune. But here was a deeper depth through which to pass: telling his mother that he had not been exonerated, had been dismissed from his position in disgrace, and already deprived of another by reason of the stigma attaching to his name.

It was a fearful ordeal, but when it was over Guy was granted that comfort which otherwise he could not have obtained. For his mother, her tears dried by her indignation, became his champion.

"This decides me, Guy," she said. "We will leave New York at the first opportunity. My boy shall not be exposed to such experiences."

"But your position at the music school!" exclaimed Guy.

"What if I can secure something better?" returned Mrs. Hammersley. "Oh, it does seem as if sometimes our misfortunes were blessings in disguise!"

Guy looked at his mother in utter astonishment. What did she mean? Surely she must be wandering in her mind, he thought.

"Yes," she went on, "if it hadn't been for my being run over, Colonel Starr"—Guy started at the mention of this name—"wouldn't have come here and Miss Stanwix been able to tell me what she did."

"Mother, what do you mean?" exclaimed Guy, startled at he knew not exactly what, and all his prejudices against Colonel Starr reasserting themselves in force. "What did Miss Stanwix tell you?"

"Something that the colonel told her on the way downstairs this afternoon. You know they are old friends and neighbors, and in mentioning to her that he had heard me sing that morning in church, he added that he was surprised I did not seek a larger public, and intimated, so Miss Stanwix tells me, that as soon as I recovered from the shock of the accident he would formally propose an engagement to me for a series of concerts."

"Oh, mother," cried Guy, "surely you would not think of accepting! Lower yourself to go about the country like a combination show. It is preposterous."

"Guy, you are absurdly prejudiced," responded Mrs. Hammersley with considerable asperity. "Does Patti lower herself? Was Jenny Lind preposterous? But wait till you hear more. It has nothing to do with a theatrical venture. Colonel Starr—who won his title by most honorable service in the war—is a member of a prominent firm of piano manufacturers, and is therefore intensely interested in musical matters. He is very anxious to form a company to travel with Miss Ruth Farleigh, an English girl who has just come over here, and who is a marvelous performer on the violin. As I told you, he more than hinted he was going to ask me to join the company, and I think should he do so I would accept. And I dare say that he could find a position for you with the organization. Indeed, he must do so, or I will not consent."

It was months since Guy had seen his mother so animated. It was apparent that she was strongly interested in the idea Miss Stanwix's talk had suggested to her.

"Of course it would be a sacrifice, in one sense," she went on, "for me to give up a permanent abiding place, but who knows but what I may earn enough in a few seasons to purchase a little home for ourselves in some charming near-by place like Short Hills or Pelham?"

At this point the bell summoned them to dinner. Guy would gladly have stayed away. He did not know how many Eliza might have told of what she had overheard. But then, he reflected, he was innocent, and should not be ashamed of anything, so, though it cost him an effort, he tried to summon all his usual buoyancy of spirits, when he descended to the dining-room with his mother.

They sat at a small side table, and thus did not come into direct communication with the other boarders, for which, on the present occasion, Guy was devoutly grateful. But all of the ladies came up to Mrs. Hammersley to inquire how she felt after her experience of the morning, and of course they all spoke to him.

The accident, however, furnished the main topic of conversation, and at last the meal, for which Guy had but little appetite, was over and they went upstairs.

"Then you do not want me to look for another position, mother?" began Guy, when they were once more seated in his room.

"Not for a day or two at any rate," was the answer. "The idea of their thinking you were a thief! I shouldn't be a bit surprised if that man Inwood hid the money away himself, and tried to double it in this disgraceful way."

Guy could not believe a business man could bring himself to do such a despicable thing, and while they were discussing the matter Eliza knocked and announced that Colonel Starr was in the parlor and would like to know if Mrs. Hammersley could give him a brief interview.

"Certainly, I will go down at once. Guy, you come with me. Who knows but a way will now be opened for both of us?"

CHAPTER VII.

COLONEL STARR.

"My dear madam, inexpressibly charmed, I am sure, to behold you so completely recovered from your shock of this morning."

Thus Colonel Starr, when Mrs. Hammersley and her son entered the parlor. All Guy's dislike for, and distrust of, the man reasserted itself as he listened to the smooth, measured tones of the voice which had a sort of cloying sweetness about it that somehow reminded the boy of a serpent gifted with the power of fascinating its victims.

"Ah, and your son," went on the colonel, extending his hand to Guy. "How greatly he favors you in looks, Mrs. Hammersley. I am sure I could not pay the young man a greater compliment than to say this."

"Why, I have never had that said of us before, Colonel Starr," and Guy, who was looking steadily at his mother, to see how she received the fulsome flattery of her caller, thought he detected a look almost of terror pass across her face. It was gone in an instant, however, and the boy thought it must all have been his imagination. His nerves, poor fellow, had been so tried that day!

After a few more inquiries regarding what action, if any, Mrs. Hammersley intended to take regarding a suit for damages against the express company, Colonel Starr gave a preparatory cough and proceeded at once to business.

"I trust, Mrs. Hammersley," he began, "you will not think I am presuming on a short acquaintance, if I now broach a subject which is very near my heart."

"Great Scott!" thought Guy, "Is the man going to propose?"

"May I be permitted to inquire," the colonel went on, "if you are irrevocably bound to the School of Music?"

"No, nothing was said about a time limit," replied Mrs. Hammersley. "You know I had my reputation to make and I might not suit the patrons, so it was left so that either party could dissolve the contract, if I may call it so, at pleasure."

"Quite right, quite right," broke out the colonel, looking immensely pleased. "Then I will not be considered as 'out of order' if I ask your consideration of another engagement I should like to tender you."

He then went on to state that he had the refusal of the right to pilot the tour of the renowned English girl violinist, Miss Ruth Farleigh. He must close with her on the following day or fail to secure her, and all now depended on getting together a first-class company at the shortest possible notice.

"All that now remains, Mrs. Hammersley," the colonel concluded, "is for you to give your consent to becoming the leading soprano of the Starr Concert Company. I have heard you sing, and I assure you that a veritable triumph awaits you on the concert stage. Indeed, so high a value do I set on your services that I will make you the same offer that I did to Miss Farleigh, one-eighth of the gross receipts."

"But—but, you are very good, Colonel Starr," rejoined Mrs. Hammersley, "but I think, seeing that have no fortune to fall back on, it would be inadvisable for me to throw up a salaried position."

Guy, sitting just behind his mother, felt like softly applauding. She was evidently not going to be deceived by the smooth spoken colonel after all.

But the latter was ready with reinforcements.

"My dear madam," he exclaimed, "you mistake me. I am offering you something much better than any salary could be. This is the way of it; the entire receipts will be counted every night, and three fourths set aside for expenses of the hall, advertising, salaries of other artists and my own profits. Of the other fourth, one half goes to Miss Farleigh, and the other to yourself. As our expenses will necessarily be heavy, you will thus be assured of receiving as much, and sometimes, a great deal more than myself. Could anything be more liberal, madam?" and Colonel Starr lay back in his chair with a sort of joyous sigh, as though ready to be martyred for his self-sacrifice in the cause of art.

"Yes, Colonel Starr," responded Mrs. Hammersley, "your proposition is indeed a most generous one, so far as it goes, and I appreciate most deeply the high, I fear me altogether too high value, you set upon my services, but what if the receipts are not sufficient to—"

But here the colonel broke in with: "Your pardon,

madam, for interrupting, but you entirely misconceive the nature of the enterprise which I am about to inaugurate. Miss Farleigh is a great card, one certain to draw immense houses. The English papers are teeming with favorable notices of her wonderful abilities, and everything English takes nowadays, you know. Besides, a woman violinist is still something of a novelty, so we have more than one string to our bow in respect to this one artist alone," and Colonel Starr laughed softly at the implied pun.

"Then—how much—that is, do you think I could be sure of making at least fifty dollars a week if I should decide to accept?" said Mrs. Hammersley.

"Fifty a week!" cried the colonel, with a rising inflection, as if to say that such a sum was not worth mentioning. "Why, just look at it for one moment in this light. We open with a concert, say in Chickering Hall, at a dollar a seat. Suppose, merely suppose, that there are but three hundred people present—an absurdly low estimate of course but I wish to convince you fairly. Well, that means three hundred dollars gross receipts. I get two hundred and twenty-five, Miss Farleigh thirty-seven and a half, yourself the same. And this for one night only, remember, and at a low basis, ridiculously low, of course, as Chickering Hall seats some 1,250 persons. Four nights of such business in seven would give you a weekly income of one hundred and fifty dollars."

Certainly this was very alluring. Even Guy could find but one flaw in it: the strangeness of the fact that his mother, a singer without any reputation to speak of, should get as much as Miss Farleigh whose praises the colonel had sounded so highly. He determined to speak about it.

"Colonel Starr," he ventured to interpose, "as my mother has no one but me to look to in financial matters. I trust both you and she will pardon me if I put one question."

"Certainly, my dear young sir," returned the colonel, with unabated affability. "Eminently right and proper for you to do so. What is it you would like to know?"

"Why my mother should get as much as Miss Farleigh, who you say is such a great drawing card."

Guy expected to see the colonel's face fall at this evidence of penetration beneath the smooth, outer surface of his proposition. But nothing of the sort took place.

The colonel gave a short laugh, and half turning in his chair, let his hand drop familiarly on Guy's knee as he replied: "Ah, Mrs. Hammersley, there is no fear of your ever being duped by the designing knaves of whom our city has too large a supply. This boy of yours will be an all-sufficient protection. And now to explain, my dear Mr. Guy, why I offer Miss Farleigh the same terms as I do your mother, I have simply to say that Miss Farleigh is extremely young, barely eighteen, and of course cannot expect to command the prices of older and more experienced performers. In fact, she has never yet appeared in public. I am to have the honor of bringing her out."

Guy's heart gave a leap. He had his man this time sure, he thought.

"But you told us a few moments ago," he broke in, "that she had made a great sensation in England."

For one instant Guy detected a peculiar glitter in Colonel Starr's eye, but his voice was as soft as ever as he answered:

"Her appearances on the other side were entirely amateur. Admission was only by invitation. And now, Mrs. Hammersley what do you say? As I told you, I cannot hold the offer open beyond to-morrow, and I should very much, like to have your answer to-night."

At this moment Eliza appeared at the door and handed in a note addressed to Mrs. Florence King Hammersley.

Mrs. Hammersley started when she saw the handwriting.

"Will you pardon me if I read this at once?" she said, turning to Colonel Starr. "I think it may be important."

"Certainly, madam," responded the colonel, with a flourish of the hand that wore the most rings.

And tearing open the envelope, the lady found herself confronted with these lines:

"Mrs. Florence King Hammersley:

"Dear Madam—As you will remember, according to the terms of our arrangement, either party could terminate at will the engagement you have as a member of our staff of instructors. We shall have no further need of your services from this date.

"J. Stanley Sinclair,
"Chairman of Committee."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]





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CHAPTER XII.

OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY.

And now did the hard discipline of the past months begin to show its fruit. Day after day was spent in the saddle, with only a noonday halt between sun and sun.

Sometimes they went speeding over patches of sandy barren, where the only signs of vegetation were monstrosities of prickly cactus or patches of sage brush, from which long-legged jack rabbits scuttled with a speed outstripping the fleetest greyhound.

Sometimes they were toiling upward over steep divides where great boulders and fallen timber made the way almost impassable; then again urging the sturdy broncos over long undulations of prairie, just taking on the first shading of green.

There were small rivers to swim and creeks to ford without number. Once they crossed a branch of the Rio Colorado in a flat-bottomed ferry boat, whose owner did not see a white face from one month's end to another—his passengers, few and far between at best, being for the most part reservation Indians and Mexican "greasers."

Had he heard or seen anything of a party—two parties in fact—of whites in pursuit of a band of Indians who had stolen a white girl from a cattle ranch in Nevada?

Yes, he had. Jim Luders of Lodeville headed one of the gangs, didn't he? Exactly. Well, Jim and his party gave up the chase some're west of the Virgin Pass. He—the speaker—ferried 'em acrost on their back tracks only two days before. Jim said Blueskin's lot with the gal took the river at the shallers ten mile above the ferry with the gal's father and some cowboys after 'em hot foot. But once them redskins got into the mountings it was "good-bye, John." Though Jim allowed that Bruton never'd come back without his gal, or Blueskin's skelp, or mebbe both—ef sech a thing was possible.

Well, even this was better than no news at all. It is true the chances of finding Bruton's party were about one in a hundred. But as Tom said, they would work that one for all it was worth. Neither of the two were foolish enough to think for a moment that by themselves they could follow up and rescue Dolly from her captors by some of those marvelous bits of strategy recorded in fiction. Only by acting in concert with experienced border men did they hope to do their part toward restoring the girl to her father.

Though the dry season had fairly set in, occasional thunder tempests occurred as the higher lands were reached after crossing over into Arizona, where the horizon line was broken by purpling mountain ranges rising higher and higher in irregular terraces till their summits blended with the haze of distance.

Passing the night under tarpaulin stretched on stakes, in a terrific downpour of rain, with heaven's artillery in full play, is not among the most agreeable of border

experiences. For dry blankets were substituted a soaked one, with the unpleasant addition of sheets of water and a drenched saddle for a pillow. But on the other hand they possessed rugged health and splendid constitutions; and there was some compensation in the clear, rarefied air, and warming rays of the sun on the following morning. And having accustomed themselves somewhat to privation, Tom and Phil were not a bit the worse for these little episodes.

It was on a morning after such an experience as this I have mentioned that the two, feeling their enthusiasm rather dampened, were trudging over the soaked prairie—taking as a landmark the double or "twin" peaks of the Virgin hills, which rise like huge portals on either side the pass.

Over the backs of the broncos, by whose side each was walking, were thrown the wet blankets and "slickers" that they might dry in the morning sun.

Both young fellows were ravenously hungry, after their supply of hard tack was exhausted, and the coffee was all gone. Breakfast had consisted of some rain-soaked jerked beef, procured the day before from a friendly Moqui on his way to the hills on a hunting trip.

Neither seemed much inclined for conversation. Phil plodded along with downcast eyes, occasionally humming under his breath some tune which was the reverse of lively.

Tom trudged onward drearily, wondering if after all they would not have been wiser never to have undertaken their present expedition. Far wiser, indeed, if he had never left a life of ease and comfort! It was hard to realize that he was the Tom of other days. Hard to—

"Say, Tom, what under the sun do you call that?"

Under the sun literally, was the peculiar phenomenon which, abruptly terminating Phil's melody, had suggested the question. Against masses of fleecy clouds, shot through with golden beams, appeared a fantastic moving panorama. The outlines of a giant, apparently fifty feet high, carrying on his shoulder what seemed a tree trunk of corresponding length, stalked on with prodigious strides behind a tilted cart as high as a house, drawn by an elephantine monster with ears like church steeples!

It was a weird and wonderful sight!

Slowly the two figures moved on, till finally they were blended with the cloud wreaths, which gradually dissolved into nothingness under the increasing strength of the sun rays.

"It's what the plainsmen call 'mirage,' I suppose," said Tom, finally. And as well as he could, he explained to his companion what he had heard and read of these fantastic atmospheric effects.

As the mists cleared away, the nearer hills, more thickly wooded than any they had seen since leaving Nevada, came into view. And they saw dots slowly crawling up a distant slope toward the girdling timber line. It was their magnified shadow against the clouds

that had produced the mirage—or at least so Tom asserted.

But something of more importance—in view of a healthy appetite at least—claimed their attention.

For a herd of antelope, suddenly breaking from cover at the left, came toward them on the dead leap.

And with good reason. In hot pursuit—at least fifteen feet at each bound—was a tawny mountain lion of prodigious size.

"P-s-s-t!" At the signal the well-trained bronco stood stock still. Tom and Phil crept each to the side of his own, and pitched forward their rifles, resting them over the saddles.

But not before they had been seen by pursuer, and pursued. With a snarl the mountain lion swerved to one side and disappeared in a thicket of greasewood. The antelopes wheeled and stood for an instant, gazing curiously at the broncos—the leader snorting and stamping his small hoofs.

"We only want one—pick off the doe at the right, she's the fattest," whispered Tom. But Phil's rifle missed fire, thanks to an imperfect cartridge. And to Tom's mortification his own aim was too him—the ball raising a little cloud of white dust four or five hundred yards beyond.

Away went the antelope with the speed of the wind in the direction of the distant slopes where the moving objects had been seen. And started from his hiding-place by the report, the long lithe body of the mountain lion was seen sneaking in the same direction.

"That's too bad!" wrathfully exclaimed Phil. "I'll have another try, though," he added, hurriedly. Showing a fresh cartridge in place of the defective one, he threw his gun to a trail, and started off at a slow trot in a half crouching attitude.

"It's no use—they've got our wind," called Tom; but he might have saved his breath. Phil was already out of ear shot.

CHAPTER XIII.

IN QUEST OF GOLD.

Very much out of breath, Phil reached the foot of the rocky slope at least two miles from the spot where he had left Tom plodding along with the broncos.

The antelopes were of course out of sight. But still hoping that they might be found feeding in the vicinity of the timber line above, Phil tightened his belt and started upward, finding, rather to his surprise, that he had struck a tolerably well defined wagon trail.

Half an hour of climbing brought him to a nearly level plateau, from which, looking back, he could easily discern Tom with the broncos moving slowly along the base of the slope.

There was no signs of the antelopes where he hoped to find them. But something else he noted which renewed his wild hope of a breakfast. It was a curl of gray smoke oozing out from the green of the nearest timber. Very naturally, Phil connected this with the supposed man and mule team whose exaggerated silhouettes he had seen against the morning clouds.

Yet they were in an Indian country and it behooved him to be cautious, even though it was hardly possible that the wily savage would so manifestly make his presence known.

"Best be on the safe side, though," was Phil's thought. So, throwing his rifle in the hollow of his arm, he made a short detour, and, striking the timber belt lower down, began making his way cautiously in the direction of the camp-fire.

The occasional stamping of some four-footed animal annoyed by flies announced his near approach. A moment later Phil made out the dingy and tattered tilt of an army wagon through the growth of timber, which was almost entirely clear of underbrush.

Drawing nearer, he saw a smoldering fire, over which some one had evidently been broiling meat cut from a quarter of antelope flung carelessly beside a gunnysack "grub" bag. The last named article served as a pillow for the proprietor of the mule team, who was snoring most unmelodiously.

Phil's hunger overcoming any scruples about rousing the stranger from sleep, he was on the point of stepping forward, when a rustling among the branches of a scrub oak a little beyond him caused him to look quickly upward.

Phil's heart came up in his mouth on the instant.

For stretched along on one of the large lower limbs was the lithe, tawny body of an enormous mountain lion—in all probability the very one that had pursued the antelope.

Two glowing eyes were fixed, not upon himself, but on the unconscious sleeper. And all at once Phil saw the huge animal draw itself together for a spring.

His rifle was at his shoulder and his cheek laid to the stock in a second. Aiming squarely between the glowing eyeballs, the boy fired.

The mountain lion, with a stifled scream, pitched forward, turning half over in the air, and plumped heavily down on the stomach of the sleeper, who, roused by the report, was struggling to his feet.

Phil ran forward with cocked rifle, but his services were not needed. The body of the great animal rolled limp and lifeless to the earth, leaving the individual so rudely roused from slumber rubbing the pit of his stomach very hard and gasping for breath.

"I'm stunned! Bring me ter little blue kag," he exclaimed, in a hoarse whisper, pointing as he spoke in the direction of the smoldering blaze. Phil hurried to obey. The other seizing the two gallon receptacle, placed his mouth at the bung hole, after which he drew a long breath.

"Ach—I feels better. It was some bitters I myself make—worm-wood and tansy. Mebbe you would not likes 'em?"

The smell suspiciously resembled something less innocent than wormwood or tansy, and Phil, who was examining the dead mountain lion with conscious pride, replied at once that he would not.

"But I'd like some of the antelope steak," he said, with a glance in its direction. "And my chum, coming up with the broncos, is as hungry as I am."

"Good!" And the stranger, who was a thick-set man, having short sandy hair and beard sprinkled with gray, got on his feet.

"You helps yourself. Ach, dot was a good shot—plumb between two eyes. Der biggest lion I ever seen, and I prospect through these States night thirty year."

"Then you are a prospector," observed Phil, slicing off steak after steak with his hunting knife.

"Mebbe you hear of Dutch Geary. That was me. But see—you not cook properly. Start up der fire, and let me do those."

Dutch Geary! The name had no particular significance in Phil's ears just then; he was too hungry to remember that he had heard it before.

Geary strung alternate dollops of fat and lean on a slim skewer, sprinkling them liberally with pepper and salt. Phil started the fire into a clear, hot blaze with some bits of dry fatwood.

"Time Tom was getting along," he said, after briefly explaining their errand in such a far away section of the country.

Leaving Geary to his cooking, Phil made his way to the edge of the timber, from whence he had an uninterrupted view of the slope and lower lands below. He easily made out the locality where he had last seen Tom with the two horses; but neither were they there nor could he see the slightest sign of them in any direction. The only rise of land which could possibly hide them from view was a range of low hills on the left, but this was entirely out of the line of march. Moreover, Tom would naturally keep on up the foot hill, where Phil himself had pursued the antelope—the report of the rifle would of itself guide him.

"Ter grub was ready!" shouted Geary, and with a final glance over the landscape, Phil hastened back to satisfy the cravings of an almost ravenous appetite.

"He vos not in sight, you say? Humph!"

Leaving Phil pegging away at the antelope steak, Geary seized his rifle and started down the slope. It had not occurred to Phil to feel any uneasiness—only a slight wonder as to his friend's whereabouts, until, as he finished the last slice of succulent meat, the distant report of a rifle reached his ear. Snatching up his own weapon, Phil hurried down the foot hill in the direction of the shot, which a few moments later he found had been fired as a signal by Geary, who was awaiting his coming with a somewhat puzzled expression on his tanned features.

The two blankets and slickers and the tarpaulin, lay in a confused heap at the foot of the slope. The short grass in the vicinity was crushed and trampled by the hoof prints of half a dozen horses.

"Injun ponies," sentimentally observed Geary, calling Phil's attention to these significant signs.

"But—what does it mean?" cried Phil, in great bewilderment.

"It means dot your friend vos carry off by Injuns, if I knows somethings about signs," was the phlegmatic reply. "Maybe," continued Geary, philosophically "it was better he be carry off than you or me."

Phil took no such selfish view of the case. Indeed, for a little time he could not believe that Geary could be right. Tom was hardly one who would tamely submit to capture. His rifle would have spoken more than once, no matter what were the odds against him; and in the clear mountain air the reports would have quickly echoed to Phil's ears, whereas he had heard nothing of the kind.

Yet in some manner Tom had vanished as though the yawning earth had swallowed him up. And when a more extended search discovered Phil's bronco, denuded of saddle and bridle, grazing in a hollow behind the little rise before mentioned, Phil, heavy-hearted enough, had to admit that Geary's conjecture was probably true.

To attempt anything like pursuit would, under the circumstances, be an act of folly. And, more distressed than one acquainted with Phil's volatile nature would have thought possible, the young fellow caught his bronco and accompanied Geary back to camp.

"If your friend was smart as you tells for, maybe he get away somehow," observed Geary, as Phil seated himself despondently by the fire.

There was a grain of comfort in the suggestion. Phil's faith in Tom's pluck and prowess was unbounded. And as Geary went on to speak of hair-breadth escapes of his own, his spirits began to rise.

"Why, it vos back in seventy-one, I think, there vos three of us did prospect down along Salt River valley. We vos attack one night where we camp on der bluff. Jim, he get a shot in der head an' pitch inter der river, where he vos drown. Me and Richter was took prisoner—"

"Richter?" exclaimed Phil, as the name suddenly brought to mind Mr. Bruton's mention of the circumstances connected with the tragic death of Phil's father. "Why, you are Dutch Geary, and the Jim you speak of was James Amsted, my own father!"

Geary took his pipe from his mouth and stared at Phil. Something like surprise was visible in his stolid features.

"Yas. Dou't I told you I was Dutch Geary before? And I thinks dot vos der name—James Amsted. He vos your fader? Well, dot vos funny."

Phil saw nothing funny about it—only a remarkable coincidence. And before Geary could continue his recital, Phil briefly told the story of his orphaned life and his meeting with his uncle, John Bruton, who had told him what little he knew of his father's death.

"And so you knows what he vos huntin' for—to see if der stories vos true about der gold on Flat Top Mountain, eh?"

"The story is true enough. I found that out myself."

Geary looked up inquiringly. Phil told him of Tom's discovery, at the ranch, and repeated the substance of Father Anselmo's letter.

"So! Well dot vos funnier than your fader to be Jim Amsted. He shtick to it always dot der gold vos there. Only Carl and I think mebbe he vos only visionary kind of. All same we shall try."

"But how? By what Uncle Jack said, I shouldn't think it possible to reach the top of the mesa without wings—or a balloon."

Geary smoked in silence for a moment, and then, taking his pipe from his mouth, shook the ashes very deliberately.

"Your fader had a plan, only we have no chance to try, as you know. Some other time I tells how Richter and me 'scape from der Injuns—not now. Ever sence I haf mean to go back to der Flat Top, but some things happen so I can't till dis spring—"

"Then you are going back there now?" eagerly interrupted Phil.

"Yas. I was meanin' to go alone by myself. But see. It vos your fader I voz before along of. Mebbe you likes to take der trip. For here you shall be in von bad fix. Vot you say?"

There was only one thing Phil could say, as a matter of course. He had neither saddle, bridle, nor pocket compass. And if those things had been in his possession, Phil by himself would hardly adventure into the

wilderness, either in search of his friend or of John Bruton's party. Whereupon he said yes—he would cast in his lot with Dutch Geary, in search of the gold of Flat Top Mountain.

CHAPTER XIV.

AN UNPLEASANT SURPRISE.

As on the ocean days go, by devoid of stirring incident or event, so on the Western plains. Then all at once something happens so startling—perhaps tragic—in its nature, as to—well, make up for lost time, if I may thus express it.

Such was the case in connection with Tom's sudden disappearance.

He had been a trifle provoked at Phil's obstinacy in following the antelope with all odds against him. Hoping to overtake his companion before he was out of sight, Tom, leading his own bronco, at the same time whistled for the other one, which was lagging in the rear.

But Mustard had caught sight of better grazing ground further away to the left. In place of obeying, his heels flew in the air, and with a squeal, half defiant, half mischievous, the blue bronco wheeled suddenly, and, dashing off at full speed, disappeared behind one of the low hills at the left.

Tom had no other resource than to follow. And as he hurried round the sandstone formation, lo, a most unwelcome and indeed alarming surprise.

For sitting erect on as many Indian ponies were half a dozen savages in war paint and feathers—evidently lying in wait for the unfortunate owner of the bronco.

Tom started back and made a motion to unslung his rifle, but a second too late. The coils of a lasso came hurling through the air, and the loop, settled neatly over his head, was drawn straight by a sudden jerk so as not only to momentarily deprive him of breath, but to throw him from his feet.

When Tom recovered from a terrible sense of suffocation, he was being hoisted by the hands of two brawny redskins into the saddle of his own bronco, while a third Indian, with stolid suggestiveness, held the muzzle of Tom's Winchester at his head.

Resistance under the circumstances would have been as useless as attempted expostulation. Tom passively submitted to have his right arm bound to his body—his other being left free that he might guide the bronco.

Further lashings were not needed, for his revolver and knife were in the possession of his captors, who themselves were armed with short carbines.

The echo of the shot fired by Phil came reverberating from the range. A muttered consultation followed. Then a dismounted Indian crept round the base of the rise for a reconnoissance, and returned some ten minutes later leading Phil's bronco.

Another brief discussion resulted in stripping Phil's horse of its accoutrements. The blankets and slickers were left behind as too cumbersome, the saddle and bridle alone being taken. Then, at a gesture from the grim-visaged leader, the party started off—heading, as nearly as Tom could judge, well to the eastward.

"I'll circumvent you fellows yet," was the captive's inward reflection as, grinding his teeth with inward rage, he watched the short, thick set Indian who rode on his left. For this savage, who wore a leather hunting shirt over his buckskin breeches, had let the bridle fall on his horse's neck, and with evident satisfaction was examining the contents of Tom's haversack. His pocket compass, spare cartridges, the corked bottle containing matches, and a dozen other articles invaluable to the plainsman were successively examined and replaced. After which the haversack itself was thrown over the shoulders of its new owner, who grinned in a most exasperating manner as he saw Tom's angry eyes fixed upon him.

To what tribe or reservation his captors belonged Tom had no means of knowing, any more than what their object might be in making him a prisoner. On the whole they did not seem brutally inclined, as he might have had reason to fear. So Tom resolved to try as to their knowledge of his own tongue.

"Say—you know Blueskin?" he asked, suddenly.

A chorused grunt—whether of surprise, affirmation, or indifference it was impossible to say—followed the question.

The savage who had appropriated Tom's revolver—a tall, sinewy fellow, wearing a silver crescent hung

about his neck from a twisted horse-hair cord—nodded several times.

"Me know Blueskin. Yes. Take um white pappoose. Make her squaw some day!"

Another chorus—this time of guttural laughter—seemed of itself proof enough that English as she is spoken was understood by the entire party. Tom's hot blood surged furiously through his veins.

Yet to what end would be the angry speech which rose to his lips? And with a tremendous effort he choked down his wrath.

"What are you going to do with me?"

"Dunno yet. Mebbe make you Injun. All same like him—Straight Arrow."

The speaker nodded in the direction of one of the party, who thus far had not spoken, or indeed shown by look or sign the slightest interest in all that had taken place.

Straight Arrow was by far the youngest of the party. He was a lithe, dark-skinned young fellow, wearing a rather fanciful deerskin rig profusely adorned with beads. His face itself not unpleasant—was free from the disfiguring paint with which the features of the others were streaked.

He glanced round as his name was spoken and Tom fancied that the dark eyes which met his own showed a faint shadow of friendly interest. Yet this might have been only imagination. Then hour after hour the party rode on in unbroken silence.

The country grew hilly and irregular as they advanced. Soon the rising land, patched here and there with verdure gave place to scrubby growths of pine. Behind the foothills in the distance was a lofty range—one peak which rose pillar-like above all the rest having its summit in the clouds.

There was no noon halt made excepting as the horses were allowed to drink at a hillside stream. Some parched corn and dried beef were passed round—Tom receiving even a larger share than the others. And while the horses were slaking their thirst Straight Arrow filled a gourd with cool water which he silently extended to Tom.

"Thank you ever so much," said Tom heartily. And though the young Indian made no reply Tom saw a faint smile flit across his dark features.

"So he understands English," was the captive's thought. And then as the march was taken up again Tom's brain became busy with conjectures as to the reasons for his capture. He did not for a moment believe that any bodily harm was intended. He was more inclined to think himself in the hands of a party of thieving Sioux rather than bloodthirsty Apaches who by all he had heard were by no means so easy-going toward their prisoners.

But having plundered him why had they not turned him adrift? Unless indeed his captors feared he might belong to a party in the vicinity who being advised of the outrage would pursue and take signal vengeance.

Possibly their intention was to take him a long distance into the wilds, and there leave him to shift for himself without arms or a horse—which simply meant a lingering death.

But conjecture as Tom might, he had no way of finding out whether he was right or wrong. All he could do was to wait.

Regarding Phil, Tom did not feel any great anxiety. He knew that his companion was almost sure to encounter the prospector or hunter whom they had seen in the distance, and through his aid sooner or later Phil would again return to civilization.

About nightfall a halt was made among the foothills, which they had fairly entered. Rather to his surprise, Tom's arm was released, and he was allowed perfect liberty of action—a fact which confirmed him in his previous conjectures. No one gave the slightest heed to his movements—indeed Tom got the idea that his escape would be looked upon with perfect indifference.

A fire was built on the banks of a narrow stream. No game had been met with during the day, so that, as on the march, jerked beef and parched corn were served out. Straight Arrow, reticent and impassive of feature, approached Tom, who was sitting moodily on a fallen tree trunk.

"Why young white not go?"

"Go—where?" was Tom's very natural query.

"Anywheres. Injun no want him. Only want horse an' gun."

"Nice job for me to start off on foot—no compass, no provisions or firearms. How would you like it, Straight Arrow?"

"Injun not mind. Not mind much, anyways. S'pose hard for young white. But—"

Straight Arrow pulled himself up and seemed to consider.

"Me like um white. Tell you why. My mudder Sioux squaw. She marry white man. Him ol' Dutch Geary—all time in mountains, hunt for gold. Mebbe you hear 'bout him."

Tom nodded. Dutch Geary was the prospector whose name Bruton had mentioned in connection with that of Phil's father. How strange! And Tom knew such marriages were very common on the plains.

"My mudder die. Den I leave ol' Geary cause one day he try strike me. I live on reservation. Some time 'go off on hunt like now."

From the young Indian's further explanation Tom gathered that the little party of Sioux belonged to the nomadic class that will never settle down to agricultural pursuits like many of the reservation tribes. In winter they were content enough to accept government rations; but in summer, ostensibly for hunting, more or less of them drifted out on the plains—the white man and his property being considered as lawful plunder whenever circumstances permitted.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



RULES AND REGULATIONS

Governing the Admission of Candidates into the Military and Naval Academies as Cadets.

(Compiled from Official Documents.)

UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY.

(Part V.)

ACADEMICAL EXAMINATION (continued).

2. To parse fully and correctly any ordinary sentence.

3. To correct in sentences or extracts any ordinary grammatical errors; such as are mentioned and explained in ordinary grammars.

Geography.—Candidates will be required to pass a satisfactory examination, written or oral, or both, in geography, particularly of our own country.

ACADEMIC DUTIES.

The academic duties and exercises commence on the first of September, and continue until the first of June. Examinations of the several classes are held in January and June, and, at the former, such of the new cadets as are found proficient in studies and have been correct in conduct are given the particular standing in their class to which their merits entitle them. After each examination, cadets found deficient in conduct or studies are discharged from the Academy, unless the Academic Board for special reasons in each case should otherwise recommend. Similar examinations are held every January and June during the four years comprising the course of studies.

These examinations are very thorough, and require from the cadet a close and persevering attention to study, without evasion or slighting of any part of the course, as no relaxations of any kind can be made by the examiners.

Military Instruction.—From the termination of the examination in June to the end of August the cadets live in camp, engaged only in military duties and exercises, and receiving practical military instruction.

Except in extreme cases, cadets are allowed but one leave of absence during the four years' course: as a rule the leave is granted at the end of the first two years' course of study.

PAY OF CADETS.

The pay of a cadet is \$540 per year, to commence with his admission to the Academy, and is sufficient, with proper economy, for his support. No cadet is permitted to receive money, or any other supplies, from his parents, or from any person whomsoever, without the sanction of the Superintendent.

Cadets are required to wear the prescribed uniform. All articles of their uniform are of a designated pattern, and are sold to cadets at West Point at regulated prices.

EXPENSES OF CANDIDATES PRIOR TO ADMISSION.

The expenses of a candidate for board, washing, lights, etc., after he has reported and prior to admission, will be about \$10. Immediately after being admitted to the institution he must be provided with an outfit of uniform, the cost of which will be about \$90, making a total sum of \$100, which must be deposited with the treasurer of the Academy before the candidate is admitted. It is best for a candidate to take with him no more money than will defray his traveling expenses, and for the parent or guardian to send to "The Treasurer, U. S. Military Academy," the required deposit of \$100. Any deviation from the rule as to the amount or manner of making the deposit must be explained in writing, by the parent or guardian of the candidate, to the Superintendent of the Academy.

ASSIGNMENT TO CORPS AFTER GRADUATION.

When any cadet of the United States Military Academy has gone through all its classes and received a regular diploma from the academic staff, he may be promoted and commissioned as a second lieutenant in any arm or corps of the army in which there may be a vacancy, and the duties of which he may have been judged competent to perform; and in case there shall not at the time be a vacancy in such arm or corps, he may, at the discretion of the President, be promoted and commissioned in it as an additional second lieutenant, with the usual pay allowances of a second lieutenant, until a vacancy shall happen.

[THE END.]

UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY.

(Part V.)

GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE EXAMINATION (continued)

2. Explain the three forms of government in the colonies: royal, proprietary and charter. Name the colonies that originally existed within the present limits of Massachusetts; of Connecticut. When were those colonies united? What did the colony of Pennsylvania include? When was it divided?

3. State the leading events of the colonial wars, and give the results of each war.

4. What were the remote and immediate causes of the Revolution? Explain the navigation acts, the stamp act, writs of assistance. Name the principal battles and other leading events in the wars of the United States, giving the names of commanding officers, and stating the results of the battles.

5. Give an account of the formation and adoption of the Constitution. Give the names of the Presidents in order, and the leading events in each administration.

ADMISSION.

XII. Candidates that pass the physical and mental examinations will receive appointments as Naval Cadets, and become students of the Academy. Each cadet will be required to sign articles by which he binds himself to serve in the United States Navy eight years (including his time of probation at the Naval Academy), unless sooner discharged. The pay of a Naval Cadet is \$500 a year, commencing at the date of his admission.

Each Naval Cadet must on admission deposit with the pay officer the sum of \$20, for which he will be credited on the books of that officer, to be expended by direction of the Superintendent in the purchase of text-books and other authorized articles.

All deposits for clothing and the entrance deposit of \$20 must be made before a candidate can be received in the Academy.

SUMMARY OF EXPENSES.

Deposit for clothing, \$196.60; deposit for books, etc., \$20. Total amount required, \$216.60.

The value of clothing brought from home is to be deducted from this amount.

Each Naval Cadet one month after admission will be credited with the amount of his actual expenses in traveling from his home to the Academy.

COURSE OF INSTRUCTION.

A general idea of the instruction can be gained from the following schedule:

First year: fourth class—First term.—Mathematics—Algebra: Fundamental operations, reduction and conversion of fractional and surd quantities, reduction and solution of equations of the first and second degrees, inequalities, involution and evolution. Number of recitations a week, 4; number of months, 4. Geometry: Geometry of the straight line, of the circle, and of the plane, theory of proportion; properties of similar figures. Number of recitations each week, 2; number of months, 4. English studies, history and law—English: The structure and historical development of the English language; syntax, analysis of sentences; punctuation and capitals, exercises in the composition of letters. Number of recitations a week, 2; number of months 4. History: Outlines of history, especially the history of Greece and Rome, and of the states of western Europe; historical geography, important points in naval history by notes or lectures. Number of recitations a week, 3; number of months, 4. Modern languages—French: Sauveur system of teaching languages. Number of recitations a week, 5; number of months, 4.

[THE END.]

EDITORIAL CHAT

Address all communications to "Army and Navy," STREET & SMITH,
238 William Street, New York City.

The American boy is not overburdened with holidays. They do not dawn on his horizon of fun in a bewildering procession, but when they do appear in the course of human events he enjoys himself about as thoroughly as any boy on earth. Every American lad celebrates at least ten days in the year. These are New Year's Day, Washington's Birthday, Labor Day, Decoration Day, the Glorious Fourth, Election Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas (the best of all!) his birthday, and that day in early summer when he first goes in swimming.

Ten out of three hundred and sixty-five! What a pitifully small percentage. Down in the Central and South American Republics they do things differently—from a boy's standpoint. Down there they don't commemorate their birthdays, but their regular saint's day. For instance, every boy named John celebrates the feast day of San Juan (St. John). All the Josephs unite in keeping the day of San Jose, and every Patrick with any self-respect does honor to the natal day of that venerable saint San Patricio. These saints' days are also general holidays, days on which no true Latin-American will soil his hands in toil. They come with commendable frequency too. That's the best of it. The North American boy's ten pales into insignificance beside the South American youths' thirty-nine holidays.

Still, between ourselves, the American boy derives more good, rousing uproarious fun from his ten than his contemporary south of the line does from the thirty-nine. Which all goes to show that quality not quantity counts in this old world of ours. In passing, just remember that next Thursday will be Thanksgiving Day, one of the very best of our holidays. To the general run of boys it means plenty of turkey and fixin's, freedom from school and an opportunity to go out and whoop in the brisk November air. Still we think American boys will find time between bites to be thankful for many things, the present prosperity, the fact that they live in the grandest country on God's footstool, and last, but by no means least, the knowledge that the year has brought to them the new publication, *Army and Navy*.

The naval and military cadet stories contained in this number completes the ten selected for our "Criticism Contest." The terms of this novel contest call for letters of criticism on the best story of the ten naval and military cadet novelettes published in Numbers 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23 of *Army and Navy*. If you have read these stories by Lieutenant Garrison and Ensign Fitch you should be able to name that which you think was the best written and most interesting. Five prizes of five dollars each are offered and, as the money will be paid before the 25th of December, the fortunate winners will find themselves provided with Christmas pocket money. You will do well to try it.

Those of our readers, who can write short stories should read the announcement of the Short Story contest in the Amateur Journalism department of this number. A prize of five dollars is offered for the best short story submitted by an amateur author. By amateur authors is meant those who are interested in amateur journalism and who do not contribute regularly to the professional press. The stories can be on any subject, but they must conform to the conditions given in the announcement.

A reader, G. S. S., of Pottsville, Pa., asks for information concerning promotion from the ranks in the United States Army. It is a subject of more than usual interest because it treats of a way by which young men can obtain commissions when they are debarred from the West Point Military Academy. Paragraph 23, Army Regulations, 1889, states briefly: "Vacancies in the grade of second lieutenants are filled by appointments from the graduates of the Military Academy, so long as any such remain in service unassigned. Vacancies thereafter are filled by appointment of meritorious soldiers favorably recommended in accordance with act of Congress approved June 30, 1892."

The essential part of the above mentioned act reads: "All unmarried soldiers under thirty years of age, who are citizens of the United States, are physically sound, who have served honorably not less than two years in the army, and who have borne a good moral character before and after enlistment, may compete for promotion to the grade of second lieutenant." Each year those soldiers who wish to enter the competition send a written application to their commanding officer. These applications are forwarded through the regular channels to Washington and in due time the applicant is ordered to Fort Leavenworth or Fortress Monroe for examination.

These examinations are severe and fall but little short of those held at the military academy. The questions include grammar, spelling, mathematics (logarithms, algebra, geometry, trigonometry and elements of surveying), geography, history, constitutional law, international law, army regulations and army tactics. If the candidate passes he is commissioned and placed in the direct line of promotion. There are now serving in the ranks as private soldiers many worthy and well-educated young men who have entered the army for the sole purpose of winning a commission.

Arthur Sewall

ATHLETIC SPORTS

AMATEUR AND PROFESSIONAL



(Brief items of interest on local amateur athletics at the various colleges and schools are solicited. Descriptions and scores of match games will also be published if sent to this department.)

It has been for several years past a part of the policy of each one of the big colleges to foster interscholastic athletics as a means of developing promising material for the college football, baseball and athletic teams or the crews. Pennsylvania is now experiencing the benefit of her efforts in behalf of interscholastic rowing. The races between the schoolboys at Philadelphia early in the summer proved very successful and Penn's freshman class in consequence contains an unusually large amount of excellent material drawn from the preparatory schools in the vicinity of Philadelphia. Many of the freshman candidates are already experienced with the oars, thereby necessitating a less expenditure of time in coaching.

With the approach of cool weather comes a new crop of ice bicycles, freakish in appearance though perhaps ingenious in designs. Although a practicable bicycle of the sort is not seemingly beyond the attainment of the cycling inventor, it is not likely that the demand for such vehicles is sufficiently large to tempt the capitalists to invest any large amount of money in their manufacture. When there is good ice available almost every athletically inclined person is content to skate. There are times when cycling is uncomfortable, and zero weather is accepted by the average cyclist as a signal for giving his wheel a well-earned rest. The Patent Office reports bear witness to the fact that there are still plenty of inventors who think they can see a fortune awaiting the designer of an acceptable ice bicycle.

According to the reports of the captain of the Park guards at Fairmount Park, Philadelphia, 219,364 bicyclists entered the Park through the month of August, including the week of the national meet. During the same month 230,005 pedestrians, 29,346 horse drawn vehicles and 883 horseback riders entered the Park.

The Carlisle Indians were first organized four years ago by W. G. Thompson, disciplinarian, a former West Point man. There was no coach, no trainer of any kind, but the boys from the plains rapidly proved themselves natural football players. They took readily to the rough and tumble work, and played with a sort of intuitive pluck and strategy, that won for them the plaudits of all adepts in the game. Good material for putting up this sport became plentiful in the Indian school, until now they are well able to cope with the strongest elevens of our universities. The men are all magnificent specimens physically. They are constantly in form, as their training at the Carlisle school is of such a nature as to require perfect physical condition. Last year they depended very largely upon their heavy line and sheer strength in playing the game, but it will be a different system seen this season.

The membership of the League of American Wheel men is again hovering below the hundred thousand mark, the withdrawals of the last few weeks having greatly exceeded the additions. The secretary's returns recently showed the total league membership to be 93,767. New York State contributes 26,446 toward these figures, while totals of other leading states are: Pennsylvania, 23,675; Massachusetts, 12,071; New Jersey, 6,724.

While paced racing in this country is not new, it has this year had for the first time the enthusiastic support of the public, owing to the remarkably fast time made in this sort of racing. The contests in which Michael, Starbuck, McDuffie and Lesna have taken part behind multicycle machines have attracted a uniformly large attendance, and legitimate racing has suffered in consequence. While it is not the desire of the writer to intimate that that paced racing is not legitimate, it is not the sort of racing which must eventually become popular in this country. The critics maintain that a race is a battle between riders who fight it out without any outside force or assistance. In a paced race it is merely a matter of how fast the riders on the big machines can travel. In the recent race at Philadelphia between Michael and Starbuck the Philadelphia man had the best of the pace-making, and he won. Probably most of Michael's races have been won in the same way. Motor pacing has been introduced in France, and it will be tried in this country. When it is reduced to a science it will be possible for a rider to follow such pace possibly close to a mile a minute. Stocks, in England, was paced by a motor cycle when he made a mile in 1:34.2-5. This record for that reason will not be allowed by the L. A. W. The fastest mile made with human pacemakers is that made by Michael at the Willow Grove track, in Philadelphia. Paced by a sextet and a quadruplet, Michael made a mile in 1:36, and he is confident that he will be able to do better. The record mile in competition, unpaced is close to two minutes. This shows how much work the pacemakers do. Paced racing is expensive—entirely too expensive for a regular racing diet.



J. W. STOCKS.
Famous English Record Holder.

In the novel coasting race held on Cedar Grove Hill, near New York city, recently, by the Associated Cycling Clubs of New York, all the crack coasters in the Eastern states were in the competitive list. H. A. Woodward, the champion of the New York Athletic Club and winner of the Associated Cycling Club's contest last year, was prominent in the list.

W. A. Shockley, of the Boston A. A., who turned out to be the winner, was one of the lightweights for the contest, his avoirdupois being 170 pounds. His machine weighed twenty-three pounds and was geared to seventy-seven. William Firmin, of Chicopee Falls who captured second place, weighs 217 pounds, and rode a wheel weighing twenty-five pounds and geared to seventy.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

ALL THE WORLD OVER.

"Gone to the Diggings."

In February, 1848, gold was discovered in California by men who were digging to make a backwoods mill-race. People were sceptical at first as to the importance of the discovery, but in May several gold-diggers arrived in San Francisco, bringing bottles, tin cans, and buckskin bags filled with the precious metal. One of them passed along the street holding up a bottle of dust, swinging his hat and shouting, "Gold! gold! Gold from the American River!"

Then San Francisco believed, and was thrown into a fever of excitement. Men hastened to sell their possessions that they might obtain means to journey to the gold-diggings.

Rowboats, worth fifty dollars, were sold for five hundred to those wishing to sail up the bay into the Sacramento. The price of shovels jumped from one dollar to ten dollars. Stores were rummaged for pick-axes and hoes to dig out gold, and for bottles, vials, snuff-boxes and brass tubes to hold it.

By June, San Francisco was as if it had been swept by an epidemic: three fourths of the male population had gone to the mines. House property dropped one-half in value, as did all merchandise not used in the mines. On the doors of a score of houses was posted the notice, "Gone to the Diggings." Labor rose ten-fold in price; negro waiters received ten dollars a day and cooks fifteen dollars, and even such prices as these did not induce the eager gold-seekers to remain in the city.

The jailer of San Jose had ten Indian prisoners under his charge in the lockup. He took them with him to the mines, where they worked for him until other miners, jealous of the jailer's success, incited them to revolt.

The force of United States troops was so thinned by desertion that Colonel Mason, the commander and governor of California, and Lieutenant Lannan, commander of a man-of-war, and the Rev. Walter Colton, the chaplain, formed a mess to cook their own meals.

With Rare Courage.

The whole tribe of wild dogs which, in closely allied forms, are to be found in the wildest jungles and woods of Asia, from the Himalaya to Ceylon, and from China to the Taurus, generally display a courage which entitles them to a high place among the most daring of wild creatures.

The "red dogs," to give them their most characteristic name, are neither large in size nor do they assemble in large packs. Those which have been from time to time measured and described seem to average three feet in length, from the nose to the root of the tail.

The pack seldom numbers more than nine or ten; yet there is sufficient evidence that they are willing and able to destroy any creature that inhabits the jungle, except the adult elephant, and perhaps the rhinoceros creatures whose great size and leathery hide make them almost invulnerable to such enemies as dogs.

The quality of courage possessed by the hunting dogs appears in a marked difference of habit from that noticeable in all other carnivorous beasts. As a rule, each ferocious animal has its natural and favorite prey, which may vary in different localities, but it is in each case the easiest and most profitable victim.

Tigers, for instance, are cattle-slayers or deer-killers, just as cattle or deer happen to be most abundant in their district. Leopards prey on goats, sheep, and,

when they can get them, on tame dogs; wolves, on sheep and cattle; weasels, on rats and mice.

But, though the jungles which they visit abound in defenceless animals, the wild dog does not limit his attacks to these. The packs deliberately pursue and destroy both the black and Himalayan bears and the tigers, affording perhaps the only instance in which one carnivorous species deliberately sets itself to hunt down and destroy another.

From their rarity, the uninhabited nature of the jungles which they haunt, and their habit of hunting at night, observations of their habits are rare.

But the general belief of the wild tribes of India is borne out by two stories told of their attacking the bear and the tiger, which put the fact beyond doubt.

A bear was found by an English officer standing at bay before the dogs. He had killed one, but his hide and body were torn in strips by the bites of the pack. In the other case, the fresh bones of a tiger were found, and close by lay the freshly killed bodies of three wild dogs, which had fallen in the fight.

Remembering not only the strength and activity of the tiger, but the astonishing pluck with which, even when wounded, it will constantly charge a line of elephants and endeavor to scale the howdah—which is, in fact, a fort with an armed garrison—it is difficult to overestimate the courage of the wild dogs in meeting and destroying such an antagonist.

Oldest Cities of the World.

London as a place of habitation we rightly regard as being of great antiquity, but in this respect it is a babe in swaddling clothes when compared with some of the cities of the world.

It is over 1950 years since Caesar's legions visited London and Paris and brought them under the world-wide dominion of Rome. But at that time they were nothing more than little collections of mud huts, and inhabited by rude and uncivilized Britons and Gauls.

The city of Marseilles has been in existence 2,497 years. It was founded by a colony of Greeks, when Rome, the future conqueror of both it and Greece, was nothing but a tiny village. Rome is about 2,650 years old. Of all the cities that were in existence when it began, and still retain their places on the maps, Rome is the most flourishing and best preserved. It has gone through so many wars, sieges and captures, without being destroyed, that it is called the "Eternal City."

But Rome is by no means the oldest city on the globe, or even in Europe. Athens, the capital of Greece, is about 3,453 years old—older than any other European city. Tangier, in Morocco, is probably over 2,700 years of age.

Several Asiatic towns are credited with continuous existence covering longer periods than those of Europe or any other part of the world. Pekin, the capital of China, is said to be about 3,000 years old or more; Jerusalem, which was a Jebusite city in the days of Abraham, is 3,900 years old at least.

But there is one other city, and probably only one, that surpasses even Jerusalem in antiquity. This is Damascus, once famous for its manufacture of silks, jewelry and arms. A Damascus blade was prized as superior to all others. They are no longer made, the method by which the armorers of Damascus tempered the steel being one of the lost arts. The exact date of the founding of Damascus is not known, but it is said to have been begun by a great-grandson of Noah. It is probably 4,200 years old, at any rate, and the oldest city in the world.



NOTICE.—Questions on subjects of general interest only are dealt with in this department. As the ARMY AND NAVY WEEKLY goes to press two weeks in advance of date of publication, answers cannot appear for at least two or three weeks. Communications intended for this column should be addressed ARMY AND NAVY WEEKLY CORRESPONDENCE, P. O. Box 1075, New York City.

A. B. G., Detroit, Mich.—To clean an engraving, put it on a smooth board, cover it thinly with common salt, finely pounded; squeeze lemon juice on the salt so as to dissolve a considerable portion of it; elevate one end of the board, so that it may form an angle of about 45 or 50 degrees with the horizon. Pour on the engraving boiling water from a tea-kettle, until the salt and lemon juice are all washed off. The engraving will then be perfectly clean, and free from stains. It must be dried on the board, or on some smooth surface gradually. If dried by the fire or the sun, it will be tinged with a yellow color.

P. D. C., Sandusky, Ohio.—The Gulf Stream is the current which issues from the Gulf of Mexico and carries the heat of the Caribbean Sea across the northern Atlantic to the shores of Scotland and Norway. This tropical river flowing steadily through the cold water of the ocean rescues England from the snows of Labrador. Should it by any chance break through the Isthmus of Panama Great Britain would be condemned to eternal glaciers.

Reader, Terre Haute, Ind.—A bound book is a suitable Christmas or birthday present for a young man to give to a young lady. Do not give jewelry or an expensive present unless you are engaged. We go to press seventeen days before day of publication, and as you did not send us your full name and address we could not answer your question by mail.

J. C. O., Philadelphia, Pa.—One hundred and thirty-eight pounds, five feet nine inches in height, is at least nine inches above the average for a boy sixteen years of age. 2. If the printing ink has become hard from cold, place it near the fire if you want to make it soft. If hard from other causes, mix a little varnish with it.

R. McL., Malden, Mass.—1. Write to the Secretary of the Navy. 2. The Nautical Schoolship "Enterprise" would be the proper place for you if you desire to fit yourself for the merchant service. Its graduates are usually engaged as officers on board American steamships.

H. W., Baltimore, Md.—"Maximum and minimum" mean the greatest and least amount; as the maximum profits on exports, and the minimum profits on exports; the maximum and minimum price of corn during the year. The terms are also employed in mathematics.

D. O. M., Chicago, Ill.—1. Thanks for cordial letter. 2. It will be impracticable to publish a story on the subject you mention. 3. Enrique H. Lewis, the author of the "Nameless Story," will contribute a serial during the coming year.

Y. C. H., Boston, Mass.—1. We have no knowledge of the school you mention. Write to the State Board of Education for the information. 2. A course in a good commercial school should prove beneficial.

W. J. M., Columbus, O.—1. Ask some local dealer. 2. The Army and Navy binder is made of stiff boards and cloth and is both durable and handsome. They will hold twenty six copies.

H. V. E., Brooklyn, N. Y.—1. The two characters will be taken entirely through the academies. 2. Athletics will be mentioned in due time.

G. A., New York City.—We are not in favor of a puzzle department. The space can be devoted to better use.

E. P. C., Owensburg, Ky.—Write to the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy, Washington, D. C.



(SPECIAL NOTICE.—To insure the safe return of stamps sent to us for examination, correspondents should inclose them in a separate stamped envelope bearing name and address. The prices quoted are from current lists and are subject to change.)

The first countries to issue postage stamps were New South Wales, which issued an official stamped envelope in 1838; Great Britain, 1 penny black and 2 pence blue envelope and letter sheet in 1840, also later in the same year a 1 penny black and 2 penny blue adhesive stamps; Brazil, 30, 60 and 90 reis adhesive stamps in 1843; Geneva and Zurich, Switzerland also issued local stamps in 1843. St. Petersburg and Moscow, Russia, issued local envelopes in 1845. The first government issue of postage stamps in the United States appeared in 1847, although numerous locals and carrier stamps appeared as early as 1842.

Previous to 1871 Japan had no postal service and messenger and letters had to be entrusted to the care of private messengers and carriers, and heavy fees were charged for the transportation and delivery of the same. In March, 1871, the first attempt was made by the government to organize a postal service, which at first was limited to the government roads and between the cities of Tokio, Kroto and Osaka.

The first issue of Japanese postage stamps appeared in March, 1871, and consisted of four values, 48 mons, brown; 100 mons, blue; 200 mons, red, and 500 mons, green. They were all of similar design, small, square, with ornamental framework and all inscriptions in native characters. The sale of this issue was stopped in February, 1872, and they were declared obsolete and unfit for postal use on November 30, 1889.

The first Persian postage stamps were issued in 1870. The set consisted of four values, 1 shaki, violet; 2 shaki, green; 4 shaki, blue, and 8 shaki, carmine. Of the 1 shaki, 3,000 copies were printed; of the 2 shaki, 5,000 copies; of the 4 shaki, 8,000, and of the 8 shaki, 6,000. Of this number it is said that scarcely one-quarter were used for postal purposes.

The third Japanese issue appeared in 1872-3, and consisted of seven values, 1 2 sen, brown; 1 sen, blue; 2 sen, red, 2 sen, yellow; 4 sen, rose; 1 sen, green; 20 sen, mauve; 30 sen, gray. These stamps were of new design, rectangular, with inscriptions in English at top and bottom and native characters at sides and center.

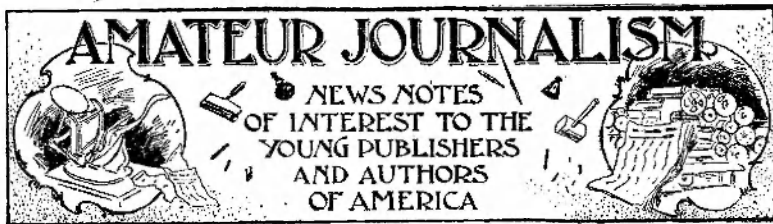
In February, 1872, the monetary system of Japan was changed somewhat to correspond with that of the United States, and a new set of stamps was issued of the values of 1 2 sen, brown; 1 sen, blue; 2 sen, red; 5 sen, green. These were of same design as the first issue, and they were in use about a year.

The first postal cards issued in this country appeared in 1873, and since that time there have been eleven different varieties. In 1879 a 2 cent international card was issued, which has been in use up to the present time. Reply paid cards were not issued until 1892, and their use has not been very general.

A new issue of Canadian stamps will appear shortly. The design of all will be similar, the head of the Queen, as she appeared at the coronation, but with coronet instead of crown, will be in center.

A 12-cent stamp of the type of August, 1861, used on the original cover, was recently found in Washington. Although it is damaged it is held at a high price.

A philatelic curiosity in the shape of a United States postal card, which passed through the mails between two Canadian points has been seen lately.



A SHORT STORY CONTEST.

To encourage amateur writers in the United States, Army and Navy offers a monthly prize of five dollars in gold for the best short story written and submitted by an amateur author. By "amateur authors" is meant those who are identified with the amateur press of the United States in a general sense, and who are not regular contributors to professional publications. Stories should not exceed one thousand words in length, and can be on any subject. Manuscript for the first contest must reach this office on or before December 13, 1897. Address all communications, "Short Story Contest" Army and Navy, Street & Smith, publishers, No. 238 William street, New York City.

EDITOR'S TABLE.

Prominence is given this week to the following letter from Butte H. Tipton, publisher of "The Junior World," and chairman of the recruit committee of the National Amateur Press Association. It is well to say in passing that Army and Navy is absolutely impartial. The department of "Amateur Journalism" will be devoted to the welfare of amateur journalism throughout the United States and to no one organization or association. Space is gladly given this week to a review of the papers of the National Amateur Press Association.

Helena, Montana,
October 6, 1897.
Army and Navy Weekly,
Amateur Journalism
Department, New York,
N. Y.

Dear Sir: In a copy of your paper received to-day I notice the department devoted to amateur journalism, which is a move in the right direction. Every year the amateur press throughout the country is gaining a firmer foothold, and within a few years professional magazines devoted to young peoples' interests will not be sought after unless containing such a department.

Permit me to say, that the scope and influence, as well as interest, of your Amateur Journalism Department will be limited if restricted to the affairs of one association.

In this mail I send a bundle of up-to-date papers representative of the National Amateur Press Association, organized in 1876, at Philadelphia. The last convention was held in July in San Francisco, and next year will be held in New York City. A committee has been appointed to arrange for the reception of the N. A. P. A. in Paris in 1900.

Enclosed find copy of my paper, "The Junior World."

Very truly,
Butte H. Tipton.

The Junior World.

'TO AID EMBRYO AUTHORS UP THE LADDER OF FAME.'

VOL. I.

HELENA, MONT., SEPTEMBER, 1897.

NO. 8

SUNSHINE.

O, Earth, what would you be
Without the sunshine bright and clear—
No flower, nor bird, nor tree
Would cheer thee—lonely, bleak and drear
The rainbow meets our view—
The landscape with its colors blent;
The sunset's gorgeous hue;
All by the merry sunshine sent.

Great Falls, Mont.

TULA V. CRAIN.

LITERARY STYLE IN NOVEL WRITING.

A Contrast: The Old and the New.

TC a reflective mind the history of the modern novel is most startling. All unknown a couple of centuries ago, it is now the great means of culture in literature, and, in its lighter vein, the love of the masses.

Until the time when De Foe delighted his world by that strange story of the castaway upon a desert island, and, soon after, shy Fanny Burney blushed with pleasure at the praises of the anonymous novel of which she only knew the authorship, culture had been dependent for its growth upon poetry, the drama and the few travels which had then been written.

Continued reading of the wondrous pages of Shakespeare, Spenser or Chaucer, together with the study of languages had developed in the reader a logical mind, capable of understanding the many relations of the long, intricate sentences found in all the popular books. With this came a sincere admiration for the clever manner in which the thoughts were woven together.

When the novel was introduced, its easy, narrative style capti-

Goodenough, the N. A. P. A. poet laureate, contributes a well-written poem entitled "Yesterday." The editor is represented by a short story on the days of '49.

A reproduction of the first page of "The Junior World" is given in this number. "The Junior World" is a very clever amateur publication edited by Butte H. Tipton and published monthly in Helena, Montana. It consists of eight pages, and in typographical appearance can hardly be excelled. The September number contains a thoughtful article on literary style in novel writing by Edith Ella Bickell; a poem by Tula V. Crain; a pastelle entitled "Memoirs of a Moss Rose," by Mabel Beaumont, and the usual editorials

"Dilettante" for October; "The Junior World," September number; "The Arcadian" and "Ocean Waves" for July, and the January issue of "Criteria" have reached the "Table."

"Dilettante" is a 4-page publication, size 7x10 inches. It is published in Chicago, Ill., by S. J. Steinberg for private circulation. It is marked as being entered for the editorial laureateship of the N. A. P. A. Frederick L. Hunter has an interesting article on an old time pilgrimage of the Golden State Amateur Press Association. The rest of the paper is taken up with editorials and departments by the staff of editors.

"Ocean Waves" is a very neat publication of four pages. The general appearance is exceedingly pleasing. It is published in San Francisco and is edited by a staff of four. It is in its fifth volume. Especial mention is due a poem entitled "Destiny," by John L. Peltret, one of the editors.

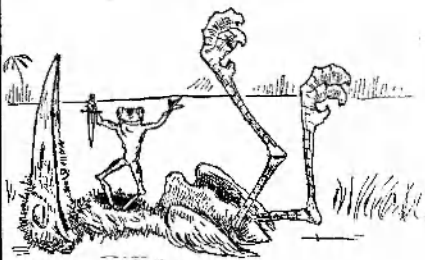
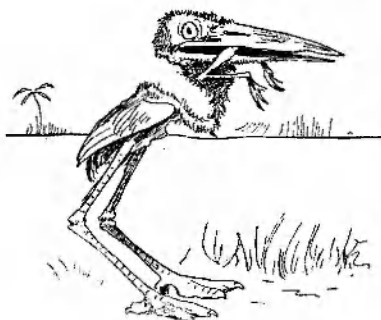
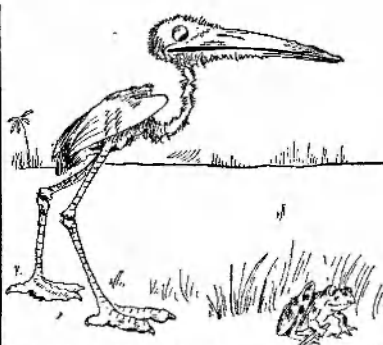
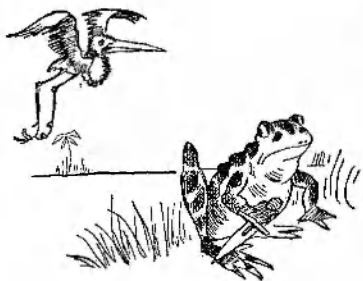
"The Arcadian" is also a four-page paper. It is published in San Francisco by Herbert M. Shirek and is noticeable for its good display of advertisements. Arthur H.



OUR JOKE DEPARTMENT.



The Unwise Crane; or, Tackling the Wrong Frog.



1. "Ah-h! Here comes the enemy."
3. The plot thickens.

2. "Watch me take breakfast."
4. "Ha! ha! The world is mine!"

A Handy Tool.

Mrs. Blinks—"Where in the world is Mr. Blink's revolver? I forgot to take it from under his pillow this morning."

New Girl (a recent arrival)—"What's it like, mum?"
"It's about so long, with a crook at one end, and it's bright like silver."

"I don't know, mum, unless it's that thing little Tommy is hammerin' tacks wid."

An International Mystery.

First citizen—"Strange, isn't it that the inhabitants of China should maltreat the missionaries sent to them from Christian countries?"

Second Citizen—"Simply incomprehensible. Hello, what's the row down street?"

First Citizen—"Oh, nothing but a lot of fun loving boys pounding a Chinese."

A Frightful Possibility.

Housekeeper—"Why don't you go to work and earn money?"

Dirty Tramp—"They'd be apt to pay me in bank-bills, mum, an' I'm afraid of bacteria."

Breaking It Gently.

Little Boy—"Mamma, the cat has eaten that seed I gave to the canary this morning."

Mamma—"Cats don't eat bird seed. You must be mistaken."

Little Boy—"No, ma'am. It was in the bird."

Very Strict.

Little Girl—"My mamma is awful strict. Is yours?"

Little Boy—"Orful!"

"But she lets you go anywhere you want to, and—"

"Oh, she ain't strict with me."

"Then who is she strict with?"

"Pap."

A Hopeless Search.

Little Dot (gazing out of the window)—"I've stood here an' watched an' watched over an' over again, an' I never saw a letter go over those telegraph wires yet."

Little Dick—"No, an' you never will, goosey. Those is 'lectric light wires."

Bicycle Accidents.

Angry Pedestrian (after a narrow escape)—"Suppose, sir, you had run into me?"

Bicyclist—"I would have bruised your shin and broken my neck."

Fragrant Flowers.

Florist—"Here, take this cartload of flowers to the Highstyle Opera House."

New Man—"Yes, sir. What shall I—"

"Unload 'em at the front entrance and give 'em to the ushers to present to the prima donna after the curtain falls on the third act."

"Yessir."

"Then reload 'em at the stage door and bring 'em back again."

Often Longed For.

Little Boy (pointing to window of rubber store)—"What's them?"

Mamma—"Those are diving suits, made all of rubber, so the diver won't get wet."

Little Boy—"I wisht I had one."

Mamma—"Why, what for my dear?"

Little Boy—"To wear when you wash me."

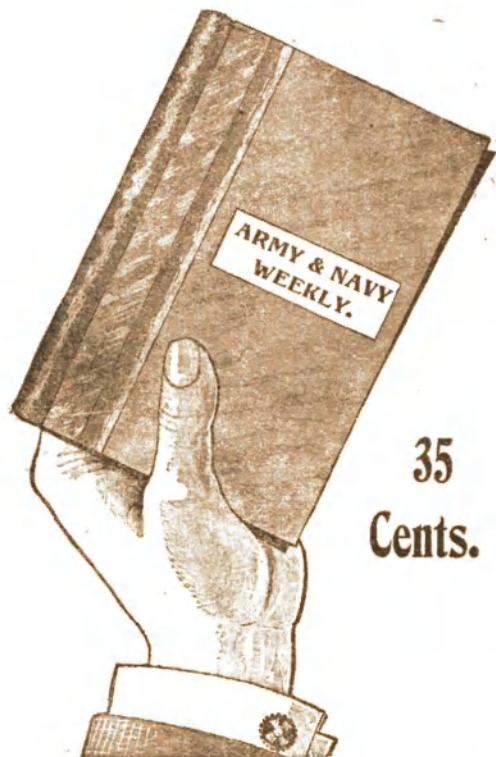
Not Unusual.

Old Lady—"What does y'r son study at that there college he goes to?"

Farmer Gotrich (helplessly)—"Ways t' spend money, I guess."

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